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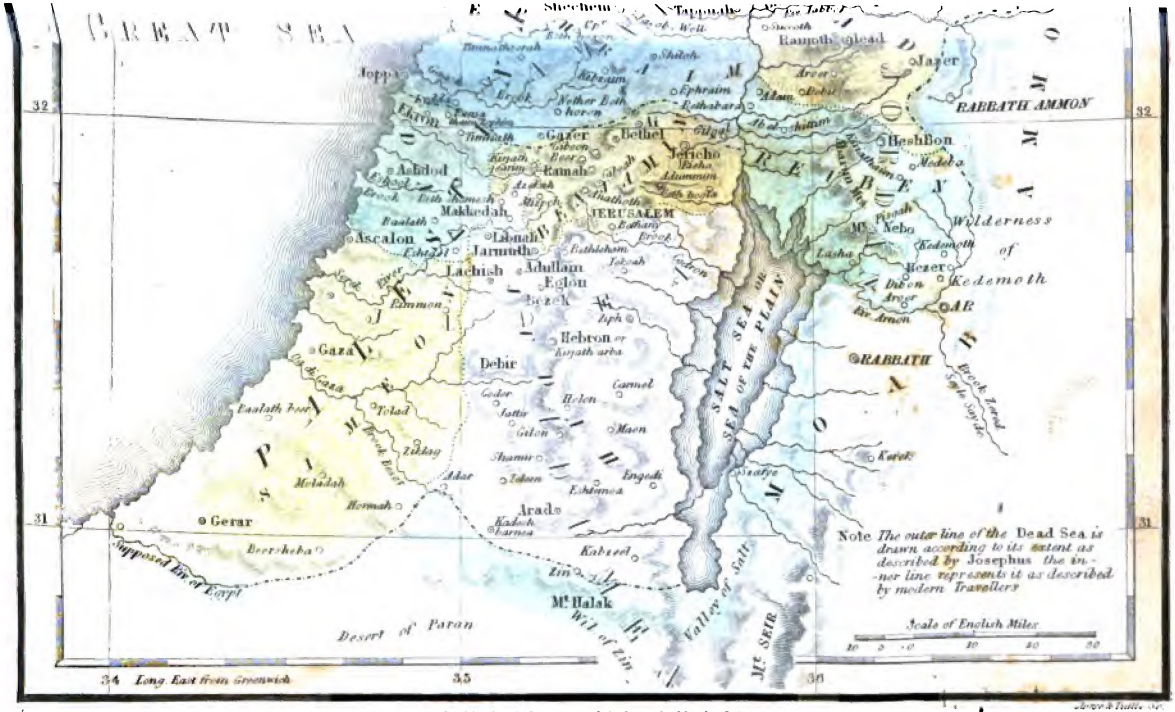

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THE

FOUR GOSPELS;

WITH

NOTES,

CHIEFLY EXPLANATORY;

DESIGNED FOR TEACHERS IN

SABBATH SCHOOLS AND BIBLE CLASSES,

AND AS

AN AID TO FAMILY INSTRUCTION.

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING MATTHEW AND MARK

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CONTENTS.

PREFACE.

A PRINCIPAL object of Notes on the Scriptures should be to render them more intelligible, and consequently more efficacious in promoting the spiritual welfare of men. As this remark implies that the holy Scriptures, though a revelation from heaven, and intended to make us "wise unto salvation," need some help, in order to be thoroughly understood, it may be well to show why the Scriptures are not as readily and as well understood as books of our own time, on ordinary topics.

1. The Bible is a very ancient book. It was composed many centuries ago, in a part of the world very different from our own, and by men, the manners and customs of whose nation were also widely different from ours. If, then, we have no knowledge respecting the countries in which they lived, and of which their writings make very frequent mention; if we have no acquaintance with the history of the times in which they wrote; if we are ignorant of the domestic and social customs with which those writers were familiar, — we cannot fully understand their writings. We may, indeed, without this knowledge, understand much of what they have written; still, much will also be wholly obscure, and much will be incorrectly apprehended; and much, that is truly valuable and impressive, will escape our notice. Hence the necessity and the value of Notes, furnishing information respecting the geography and history of the countries mentioned in the Scriptures, and pointing out allusions to manners and customs differing from our own. These remarks apply to any ancient book, or to any book written in a foreign country, as well as

to the Bible. When the different portions of the Bible were first written, there was no more need, to those for whom they were originally prepared, of special information on those points, than there is need to us of special information about the geography, history, manners and customs of our own country, or of countries which we are considerably acquainted with, in order to understand a book written by one of our countrymen. We possess this knowledge already; and the writer takes for granted that his readers have this knowledge. But let such a book continue in existence one or two thousand years, and be conveyed to a people occupying the other side of the globe, and then some special explanations would be necessary, in order that it might be thoroughly intelligible. Such explanations we actually find in the Bible itself. When Mark, who wrote his Gospel at some distance from Palestine, where Jesus and the Jews lived, had occasion to mention the Jordan, he added the word *river*, thus giving geographical information to his readers who lived at a distance from the scene of action. See 1: 5. An inhabitant of Palestine would not need to be informed that the Jordan was a river. When the same evangelist was about to relate the remarks of Jesus, which were suggested by the inquiry of the Pharisees concerning eating with *defiled* hands, he explains the ordinary practice among the Jews, which gave rise to the inquiry. See 7: 3. Now, explanations drawn from the geography, and history, and practices of the country spoken of, are only an extension of what Mark has done; an extension — because, the more distant are our times, and the more different our customs, the greater is our need of information.

And thus it happens that the very simplicity of the Scriptures renders explanatory Notes highly necessary. The Scriptures do not soar to abstract discussions. They deal with all orders of men, according to their circumstances, and hence contain countless allusions to existing matters and practices, which matters and practices need to be made known to us, who live in so distant an age, and are of so different habits.

2. The fact that our English Scriptures are a translation, renders Notes, in some form and to some extent, always requisite. It would be contrary to the universally acknowledged imperfection of human

beings, to expect that any translation could be a perfect representation of the original. Different degrees of acquaintance with languages and with general science, different degrees of experience and of skill in translating, of freedom from improper bias, and of other qualities, will, of course, lead to different results, in various passages of a translation, on the part of those who perform it. This is no less true of ordinary works than of the holy Scriptures. If, then, a person is able to illustrate some passage, by proposing a better rendering of the original than what we have been accustomed to, he may, certainly, with a becoming modesty and sense of his responsibility to God, endeavor to aid his fellow-men in understanding the oracles of eternal truth, by suggesting to them the results of his studies. Nor is there necessarily any pride in this. For while he may be able to suggest an improvement in one passage, he may thankfully acknowledge that there is no need of improvement in an immense variety of other passages; and while he feels at liberty to suggest a well-founded alteration, in order to clear up a dark passage, he concedes to others the same liberty, and thankfully accepts from them their contributions to the same cause. Our translators themselves have set us an example of such a proceeding. While they have given, in the text, what they thought the best rendering, in certain passages, they have placed in the margin other renderings, which seemed to them worthy of consideration; and many of these marginal renderings are regarded, by competent judges, as preferable to the renderings in the text.

Our English translation possesses many acknowledged excellences, and is worthy still to continue a light to our feet, and a lamp to our path. Yet, in various parts, it needs elucidation. This arises both from some of the principles which regulated the translators, and from the changes which, since their day, have come upon the meaning of some English words, and from the circumstance, that some other words have become obsolete. The great attention, too, which has been paid to manuscripts and editions of the Greek Testament, since our translation was made, confers a great advantage on a student of the present age. Without enlarging on these topics, suffice it to say, that frequently our translators paid more attention to the idiom of the original Greek, than to that of their own language;

that is, their translation is, in some instances, too literal. As an illustration, I refer to John 3 : 21 — "He that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." Now, to the mass of readers, the expression *wrought in God* is surely an unusual and unintelligible one. As to changes that have taken place in the meaning of words, I need only instance in the words *prevent* (meaning, in scriptural use, *to be before, to go before, to anticipate*), and *conversation* (meaning *conduct*). As to critical editions of the Greek Testament, it is only a Greek scholar that can rightly estimate the difference between a modern critical edition and the edition which was the basis of our English version.

3. In the Scriptures there is a great variety of composition. To say nothing of poetry and prose, there is narration of facts, there is statement of moral precepts, there are trains of argument, there are discourses and conversations. Now, while, in historical narrations, there is seldom any difficulty in perceiving the connection of one part with another, the case is very different in a course of reasoning or conversation. Careful study is often necessary to discover the precise point to which the argument or conversation is directed, and to perceive the transition from one connected thought to another, as well as references to facts and opinions that were at the time well known, but which may not now be familiar to the mass of readers. The aid of a judicious Commentary is here important. And if, in reading the Scriptures, more aid of this sort is required than in reading some other books, one reason consists in the fact, that on account of our habitual reading of the Scriptures from childhood, and on account of the nature of the subjects presented in the Scriptures, we are too prone to read without reflection, and to pass over difficulties without noticing them.

But Notes on the Bible need not, for ordinary purposes, be very diffuse. They should relate to passages, phrases, and words, that really require elucidation; while those parts of the inspired volume that are already plain, should not be enfeebled by the interference of human paraphrase. It is too common an error in Commentaries, that they overlay, or crowd out, *the word of God*, and make *the word of man* too conspicuous. There is often a profusion of remarks, pious

indeed, but not needed for elucidation, or for impression, and even hindering the reader from making his own reflections. It too often happens, that while some passages not needing elucidation are encumbered with remarks, the really obscure passages are left in their obscurity. Nor can I think it judicious to bring before the mind of an ordinary reader the great variety of opinions which have been expressed of certain passages. Such a course confuses the mind, and spreads over the whole volume of inspiration an air of uncertainty.

There may, however, in a book of Notes on the Bible, be too little, as well as too much. In the following Notes, I have endeavored to avoid prolixity, and yet not to pass over without explanation passages that really need explanation. I have also taken for granted, that a reader of this book will desire to search for himself; and have therefore frequently, without quoting the words, made references to such passages of Scripture as confirm the views I have expressed, or as may lead the inquirer to form an opinion for himself. A person who may use this book, either for personal information or for enabling him to instruct others, must submit to some labor. Frequently, passages of Scripture, as above stated, are merely referred to; and the benefit to be drawn from these passages will require that they be examined. Particularly will this be found necessary in the case of a Sabbath school teacher, or the leader of a Bible class. If such a person depends on this book as a help, he will not find his work all done for him here; but he will find, I trust, materials afforded him, by which he may *do his work himself.*

Such is the nature of the work I proposed to myself in this book, that I have not felt at liberty, even if I had been disposed, or able, to indulge in flights of fancy, or to seek any rhetorical excellence, beyond a perspicuous and simple statement of facts or opinions. Nor have I made many moral reflections. Sometimes I have suggested topics of pious meditation and of useful practical remark. At other times, I have not done so. I have been guided in this matter by the nature of different passages, and by the impressions on my own mind. An account of deeply interesting events, or of conversations, I was unwilling to interrupt; yet in such passages I have made occasionally a passing remark of a practical nature. The HINTS and TOPICS for reflection, or for remark, which I have suggested in the course of the

Notes, are intended to be truly, what they profess to be, mere hints for helping the meditations of a reader, and for suggesting thoughts to a teacher. They ought to be employed as a kind of starting-point for remark or for conversation; and the teacher should produce, from his own experience and observation, such additional illustrations and moral reflections as may appear appropriate.

That my views of some passages should differ from those of other writers, is to be expected; but that I have endeavored to convey to my readers the mind of the Holy Spirit, and to shed light over a part of the sacred volume, is my delightful consciousness. The usefulness of the effort must be left to Him from whom come all good desires and designs; whose blessing is necessary for every undertaking; and "whose approbation can prosper even mine."

Newton, March, 1837.

NOTICE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

In preparing a new edition for the press, I have made a few corrections and improvements. Besides the opportunities for revision which my own studies have furnished, valuable suggestions have been made to me by several friends. I trust the work will be found still more worthy of the regard which led to the speedy sale of the first edition.

Newton, May, 1838.

INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS.

Some information, useful to a reader of the Gospels, which cannot so advantageously be inserted among the Notes, I have thought it best to give in the form of introductory explanations. The following are the subjects:—I. The meaning of the word *Gospel*. II. The civil condition of the Jews in the time of Christ. III. The meaning of certain names, or official titles, which frequently occur in the Gospels.

I. The meaning of the word Gospel.

The word *Gospel*, in such a phrase as *the Gospel according to Matthew*, is plainly the title of the account furnished by Matthew respecting Jesus Christ. In the very common expression, *gospel of Jesus Christ*, it means *the religious dispensation* established by him. These, however, are only secondary meanings of the word. Traced back to its origin, it properly signifies *good tidings, joyful announcement*.

In what way a term expressive of joyful announcement came to be used with so specific reference to our Lord Jesus Christ, can be easily shown. Immediately after our first parents had fallen from their holy state, God announced his purpose to frustrate the wicked designs of the evil one. With reference to this same purpose, he promised to Abraham, after having separated him from his kindred, that through him and his posterity all the families of the earth should be blessed. In accordance with this promise, the posterity of Abraham were separated, by peculiar civil and religious rites, from all the nations, and brought into a very peculiar relation to God. In the time of David, new assurances were given of God's care over his people, and of his determination to bestow on them distinguished blessings. They were at length led to expect that there would arise from among the descendants of David an illustrious individual, to whom a lasting dominion should be given; to whose sway all the nations should submit, and whose administration should be signally righteous, and glorious, and happy. Blessings of all sorts were to be connected with his reign. He would bind up the broken-hearted; he would give liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound. In the time of Daniel, it was declared, that to this personage should be given dominion, glory, and a kingdom; that all people, nations and languages should serve him;

his dominion should be an everlasting dominion, which should not pass away, and his kingdom should not be destroyed.

Thus the nation had been led to expect the coming of a glorious king, under whose reign times of signal prosperity and happiness would be enjoyed. To this expected king they applied, with special emphasis, the title *Messiah*—a word signifying *anointed*, and originally applied to any king, or to any person who had been consecrated to his office by the ceremony of anointing. But he, whom they were thus expecting, came in process of time to be denominated *the* Messiah, *the* king.

The nation, though taught to expect times of distinguished glory, experienced great reverses in their condition from the time of the Babylonian captivity. They were, for the most part, subject to other powers, and at length fell under the dominion of Rome. Their religious, as well as their civil state, had suffered greatly. The holiness, as well as the royalty, which had at some former periods distinguished them, was gone. The promises in their sacred books, however, they still remembered; and, though they did not rightly understand the nature of those promises, they fondly anticipated the time when a new order of things under the wished-for Messiah would commence. The announcement of his having made his appearance would indeed be hailed as *glad tidings*, by some, through utterly erroneous views, for political reasons; by others, for higher and more becoming reasons. The former would soon experience a disappointment, and might easily become his opposers; the latter, the more they discovered his real character and purposes, would the more revere him, and confide in him as indeed the Holy One predicted by their ancient prophets.

In respect to us and to all men, the word *gospel* [glad tidings] is a truly appropriate designation of the system of religious truth and duty established by our Lord Jesus Christ. For it is, eminently, the system which clearly brings immortality to light, which proffers pardon and eternal life to the sinful, and points out the new and living way to heaven.

It may be interesting, too, to know that our English word *gospel*, when traced back to its original meaning, resembles the Greek word thus translated. *Gospel* is derived from the Saxon words *god spell*, signifying *good account, cheering intelligence.*

II. The civil condition of the Jews at the time of Christ.

After the death of Joshua, by whom the Hebrews were established in Palestine, the promised land, they lived under the government of judges—a term which must be understood in a far more extensive sense than we understand it in respect to ourselves. A reader of the book of Judges will perceive that the rulers thus named had a large share of civil and military power. Towards the close of Samuel's life, the people eagerly sought to be under the government of a king. The desired change in their affairs was accordingly made. When Rehoboam, the fourth king, commenced his reign, ten tribes

revolted from his authority, and formed a separate kingdom, called the *kingdom of Israel*. Two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, remained, and were called the *kingdom of Judah*. The kingdom of Israel was overthrown by the Assyrians, 253 years after the revolt, and 722 before Christ. The people were mostly carried away captive into Media and Assyria.

The kingdom of Judah, that is, of the Jews, properly so called, was overthrown 387 years after the revolt of Israel, and 588 before Christ, by the Chaldeans, and the people were carried away captive to Babylon. The captivity continued seventy years. At the close of this period, they were permitted, by the favor of Cyrus, into whose power the government of Babylon had fallen, to return to their own land. They rebuilt their temple, restored their worship, and enjoyed many privileges, both civil and religious. They never, however, acquired much power as a nation, being very considerably dependent on the neighboring nations. After various changes, they at length fell under the dominion of the Romans, and so remained till their national existence was terminated, about the 70th year of the Christian era.

While under the Roman power, the Jews enjoyed the free exercise of their religion; and were subjected to a very slight interference with their internal policy. They were compelled to pay tribute to the Roman government, and the power of executing a capital sentence was taken away from their courts. The highest Jewish tribunal still had power to pass sentence of death on an accused person, but the power to execute the sentence was with the Romans, and permission was required to be obtained from the Roman authority, in order that such punishment might lawfully be inflicted.

At the time of our Lord's birth, Herod the Great was king of Judea. His power extended over the whole of Palestine, both on the east and on the west of the Jordan. This power he acquired by favor of the Romans, and held it as dependent on them. At his death, shortly after the birth of Jesus, his son Archelaus was appointed ruler of Idumea, Judea, and Samaria, with the title of ethnarch; and another son, Herod Antipas, was appointed ruler over Galilee and Perea, with the title of tetrarch. Archelaus, ten years after, was accused before the Roman emperor of excessive cruelty, and was banished. The districts over which he had ruled were then reduced to the form of a Roman province, and the Roman emperors intrusted it to an officer whom they called *procurator*, or governor. He was the emperor's representative in that province. At the time of our Lord's entering on his public ministry, and for several years after, Pontius Pilate was the Roman governor, or procurator, of Judea. Herod Antipas still remained tetrarch of Galilee.

III. The meaning of certain names, or official titles, which frequently occur in the Gospels.

1. *Pharisees.*—This was the name of a numerous and powerful sect among the Jews. The origin of the name is generally traced

to a word which signifies *to separate*. Thus the name may have been intended to mark their claim to superior purity.

They were extremely rigid in interpreting the letter of the Mosaic law, and made great pretensions to piety. But they were far from the spirit of piety; considering of little account the state of the heart, and regarding as chiefly worthy of their attention those minute, external forms of obedience which might secure the notice and good opinion of men. To those laws, which were not enforced by a penalty, they attached but little importance; and, in general, regarded the ceremonial precepts as the great and weighty commands.

They not only adhered very closely to the *letter* of the Mosaic laws in their injunctions upon the people, but also observed a multitude of traditions, which they represented as even superior to the laws of Moses. These traditions were unwritten commands, which originated with their ancestors at a comparatively early date, and which had at length grown up into a system.

With all their professions of strict moral integrity, they were avaricious and devoted to the pleasures of the world, and scrupled not to use unjust means to increase their riches. In general, they were a corrupt class of men; yet there were doubtless among them persons of real integrity.

2. *Sadducees.*—This was the name of another sect among the Jews. In various respects, they were opposite to the Pharisees. They were not so numerous, nor so popular. They rejected the unwritten traditions, and held that only the written law was binding. They were also distinguished by denying the existence of any spiritual being besides God. Hence they denied the existence of angels, and of human souls as distinct from the body. They denied the resurrection of the dead. While the Pharisees were very assiduous in making proselytes, the Sadducees were not zealous in disseminating their opinions. When they sustained any public offices, they had no difficulty in conforming to the sentiments of the Pharisees, in order to secure the favor of the people.

Of the origin of the Sadducees, or of the name, we cannot speak with certainty. The Jews trace them to one Sadoc, or Sadducus, who lived about three centuries before the Christian era. The Sadducees and the Pharisees probably originated at about the same time.

3. *Scribes.*—The Scribes were a class of men employed in preserving and explaining the sacred books of the Jews. To them it belonged to copy the Scriptures, to interpret the more difficult passages, and to decide doubtful cases of religious duty. They were thus, in an eminent sense, religious teachers of the people; they doubtless gave tone and color to the sentiments of the nation. So important was this order of men, that they were eligible to a seat in the Sanhedrim, the highest court of the Jews.

4. *Lawyers. Doctors of the Law.*—These were the same as the scribes. The law which they taught and explained, was the law of Moses, or the religion of the nation. The use of our modern word *lawyer* is, therefore, different from the scriptural use of the word.

Among the Jews, the law of Moses regulated both civil and religious matters; and a lawyer among them, or a doctor of the law, was in reality a teacher of religion.

5. *Publicans.*—These were what we might call *tax-gatherers*, collectors of the revenue for the support of government. After the Jews became subject to the Romans, they were required, like the other subjugated nations, to pay tribute. The manner of collecting taxes, or tribute, was different from that which prevails among us. The Roman government was in the habit of selling to certain individuals the privilege of collecting the taxes in a particular region. What those individuals paid was all that the government received. Those individuals, having agreed with the government for a certain sum, would so levy the taxes as not only to raise the stipulated sum, but also to procure for themselves a large profit. Persons thus employed were usually Romans of considerable note; and sometimes wealthy Jews procured to themselves this employment. Probably Zaccheus (Luke 19: 12) is to be regarded as such a person. These men employed *inferior collectors;* and it is these inferior collectors that are called in the New Testament *publicans.* They were sometimes Romans, and sometimes Jews; of low rank in society, of little worth as to character, anxious for gain, and practising extortion. Hence they were despised and detested. Such persons were, among other nations, held in contempt; but probably the dislike was much stronger among the Jews, as the payment of tribute perpetually reminded them that they were not only in subjection to a foreign power, but were even contributing to the support of a heathen government.

PREFACE

TO THE

GOSPEL OF MATTHEW.

THE information concerning Matthew, in the New Testament, is brief. In the ninth chapter of his Gospel, it is related that Jesus, on one of his excursions to Capernaum, saw Matthew "sitting at the receipt of custom;" that is, in the house where he attended as tax-gatherer, or collector of the revenue. Being bidden by Jesus to follow him, he immediately obeyed. The account which Mark (2: 14) and Luke (5: 27, 28) give, is the same, excepting that the person is designated by another name; that is, *Levi*. It was, however, common among the Jews for the same person to have more names than one, and to be called by either of them. Thus *Peter* is also named *Simon*; *Lebbeus* (compare Matthew 10: 3, and Luke 6: 16) is also named *Thaddeus* and *Judas*.

That the person named *Levi*, by Mark and Luke, is the same as *Matthew*, is evident from the perfect agreement in the circumstances related by the three evangelists, and from the fact, that, in the list of the twelve Apostles (Matthew 10: 3), Matthew is called *the publican*. It was on account of his being a publican, that he was "sitting at the receipt of custom;" that is, at the custom-house, or tax-gatherer's office.

There is an additional agreement in the accounts of the three writers, and it is one which reflects much credit on Matthew. In Matthew's Gospel, after the calling of him by Jesus is mentioned, the account proceeds to state, that Jesus and many others were sitting at meat in the house. Now, from Mark (2: 15), we learn, that this entertainment took place in Levi's (that is, Matthew's) own house; and from Luke (5: 29), we learn more distinctly, that Levi (that is.

Matthew) furnished this entertainment. Matthew's design, doubtless, was, besides paying respect to Jesus, to give his former friends an opportunity for familiar acquaintance with Jesus, and to give Jesus a favorable opportunity for free and unrestrained conversation on religion and the Messiah's dispensation.

We cannot fail to notice the modesty of Matthew in his narrative. He gives himself no commendation: but while he wished to communicate the important conversation to which this interview gave rise, he has furnished no hint by which it could be known that the conversation occurred in connection with an entertainment given by himself. He wished to do honor to his Master, and to preserve the important sentiments which his Master had expressed. To others he left it, if they chose so to do, to make known the important part which he had in this matter.

Matthew's Gospel is believed, from the tradition of the earliest ages of Christianity, to have been written first of all the Gospels, in the order of time. The precise time cannot be fixed. It was probably not later than the year 50 or 60 of the Christian era; that is, somewhere within twenty or thirty years after the death of Christ. It has, however, by some writers, been assigned to as early a date as eight years after the death of Christ. A principal object with Matthew seems to have been, to excite and cherish confidence in Jesus, as the expected Messiah. His work is, therefore, distinguished by a careful pointing out of resemblances in the history of Jesus to events and declarations stated in the Old Testament.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

CHAPTER I.

THE book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;

3 And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;

4 And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;

5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;

6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her *that had been the wife* of Urias;

7 And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;

8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;

9 And Ozias begat Joa-

CHAPTER I.

1. *The book of the generation.* This expression corresponds to our word *genealogy*, or *family record;* so that the whole phrase, *The book of the generation of Jesus Christ*, means, the genealogy, or family record, of Jesus Christ. That record follows, and exhibits the names of the principal ancestors of Jesus. The word *generations* is used in the Old Testament in a similar manner; and is employed with reference to descendants as well as to ancestors. See Gen. 5: 1. 10: 1. 11: 10. From being used to designate *family record*, it came to signify *family history*, as in Gen. 37: 2; and *historical account* in general, as in Gen. 2: 4.

It was customary among the Jews, and still is among the Arabians, to preserve such lists of names as Matthew has recorded in this chapter. In the case of the Jews, it was important, because the Messiah, the great object of their expectation, was to arise from among them; and if one, professing to be the Messiah, could not trace his descent to David and to Abraham, he would fail in a particular, respecting which the prophets had distinctly spoken. Hence Jesus Christ is expressly called "the son of David." That the Messiah was to descend from the royal line of David, was firmly believed by the Jews. See Is. 9: 7. 11: 1. (Jesse was father of David.) See also Jer. 23: 5. And David's descent from Abraham was unquestionable.

2. *Judas;* the Greek method of expressing the word *Judah*. In several names of the genealogy there are slight departures from the sounds of the same names in the Old Testament, on account of the different powers of the Hebrew language, and of the Greek. Thus *Esrom*, in the 3d verse, is the same as Hezron in the Old Testament; *Aram*, v. 4, is the same as Ram in 1 Chron. 2: 10; *Naasson*, the same as *Nahshon*. *Booz*, in v. 5, is the same as *Boaz*, Ruth 4: 21. *Ozias*, in v. 8, is the same as *Uzziah*.

tham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;

10 And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;

11 And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon;

12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;

13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;

14 And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;

15 And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;

16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

17 So all the generations

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17. *So all the generations*, &c. The list of all the names from Abraham to Jesus being very long, it was desirable to abridge it. Hence several names that occur in the Old Testament history are omitted by Matthew. Thus, in the 8th verse, Joram [Jehoram, 2 Kings 8: 16] is said to have been the father of Ozias [Uzziah, 2 Chron. 26: 1]. But by examining the history, as given in the books of Kings and of Chronicles, it will be seen that there were three kings between Joram and Uzziah. There are, also, other omissions. In order to abbreviate a long list of names, omissions like these were common, as they are at the present day among the Arabians, who trace their descent from Abraham. Such omissions do not, of course, impair the genealogy, *as a whole;* for the principal point to be obtained is secured, that is, the tracing of the genealogy to a particular individual, and doing this in a way that cannot lead to mistake. It is here, however, necessary to observe that the words *son* and *daughter*, and the word *beget*, are used in the Scriptures with a much broader application than among us. They are employed in reference to a person's remote descendants, as well as to his immediate descendants. For an instance of this in the use of the word *son*, the first verse of this chapter may be consulted; and, for a similar instance in respect to the word *beget*, see Deut. 4: 25; Isa. 39: 7; in which last verse, the scriptural history shows that it was the comparatively remote descendants of Hezekiah, not his immediate children, who were to be carried captives to Babylon.

After the list of names was thus abridged, it was desirable, in order to aid the memory, to make a division of the names recorded. For this purpose, Matthew selected three principal eras in the history of the Hebrews, and included fourteen names in each class. The three eras are, the reign of David, the commencement of the Babylonian captivity (here called *the carrying away to Babylon;* see 2 Kings, 24th and 25th chapters), and the birth of the Messiah. By this means the whole length of time from Abraham to the coming of the Messiah, is divided into three parts, as stated in the verse under consideration. By numbering the names, there will be found fourteen from Abraham to David; thence onward to the captivity [that is, the carrying away to Babylon], fourteen more; and then commencing anew with Jechonias (as the 12th verse seems to require), and including Jesus, there is another set of fourteen names.

The evangelist Luke has also preserved a genealogical list of the names

from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon *are* fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ *are* fourteen generations.

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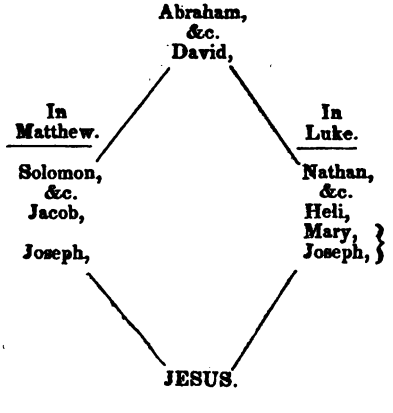
of Jesus' ancestors, chap. 3 : 23—38. The list, as given by Luke, differs from that furnished by Matthew. Matthew says, the father of Joseph, Mary's husband, was Jacob (1 : 16); Luke says, the father of Joseph was Heli. But there is no contradiction between the two evangelists; for they trace the family descent in two distinct lines. They both mention Abraham, and agree in their list of names from Abraham to David. Passing from David, Matthew proceeds with the line of the kings who descended from David, while Luke proceeds with David's descendants through Nathan, who was one of David's sons (2 Sam. 5 : 14), but not his successor in the government; and it at length appears, that by both of these lines Jesus descended from David. Now, a very natural remark, in this view of the matter, is, that Matthew traces the descent of Joseph, the reputed and legal father of Jesus; and Luke traces the descent of Mary, the mother of Jesus. But instead of inserting the name of a female in a genealogical register, Luke inserts her husband's name; that is, instead of Mary, he mentions Joseph, and calls him the "son of Heli," as he was Heli's son-in-law, having married Mary, his daughter. Thus Heli was father [father-in-law] of Joseph, inasmuch as he was father of Joseph's wife.

This view, which reconciles the two records, is confirmed by the different words used by the two evangelists to express descent. Matthew uses the word *beget*, implying natural connection; Luke uses the expression *son of*, a more general term. Thus, while Jacob is truly said, by Matthew, to have begotten Joseph, Heli is with equal truth represented, by Luke, as the father [father-in-law] of Joseph.

The account just given may thus be presented to the eye:—



It may be objected to this view of the matter, that the line, as presented by Luke, mentions two names which also occur in Matthew's list, namely,

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.

19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.

20 But while he thought on

Salathiel and Zorobabel. Matt. 1: 12, 13. Luke 3: 27. But it may be replied, that, while the names are the same, there is no necessity for believing that the persons thus named were the same.

18. *On this wise;* in this manner. The word *wise*, as a substantive, and used separately from another word, is now obsolete. It is still retained, however, as an appendage to other words; as *lengthwise*, *likewise*. It corresponds to our modern word *way*, or *manner*. ‖ *Espoused*, engaged to be married. ‖ *Before they came together;* before they lived together as husband and wife.

19. *Joseph her husband.* Among the Jews, there was commonly an interval of ten or twelve months, sometimes a much longer time, between the engagement to marry and the celebration of the nuptials. Yet, as soon as the engagement to marry was made, the persons were spoken of as husband and wife, and unfaithfulness to each other was regarded in the same light as if the marriage ceremonies had actually been performed. See Deut. 22: 23, 24. ‖ *A just man.* The word here translated *just* is as general in its application as our word *good*, and contains in it the idea of *kindness*, as well as that of *integrity*. The same word is used in 1 John 1: 9, with reference to the forgiveness of sins, which is peculiarly an act of mercy or kindness. ‖ *Not willing to make her a public example;* not willing to expose her to public infamy, by bringing an accusation against her. The kind feelings of Joseph, and the attachment which he had cherished for Mary, led him to seek a dissolution of the intended connection by giving her a bill of divorce in a private manner. According to the then existing practices among the Jews, a bill of divorce could be procured without having the cause of the divorce distinctly stated in the writing.

20. *The angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream.* God, who had ordered all the circumstances by which Joseph was so much perplexed, made a special communication to him, in a dream. The word rendered *angel* signifies primarily *a messenger*, and applies both to men who are sent by their fellow-men on messages (as in Luke 7: 24, where the expression *messengers of John* is in the Greek *the angels of John*), and to those heavenly beings whom God is represented as employing. Since the idea of *a messenger performing the will of another*, is the fundamental idea of the word *angel*, the word is applicable to any thing which the Lord may employ in executing his purposes, particularly if his purposes are executed in an uncommon or striking manner. Hence the word is applied to the providential care of God (Ps. 34: 7. 91: 11), and to any special arrangement of circumstances by which God effects some signal results (2 Kings 19: 35, in which instance probably the pestilence is called an *angel;* Acts 12: 23, in which instance a sudden and fatal attack of disease is so called); as well as to the real employment of heavenly beings, as in Acts 12: 7—11. 10: 3, 30. In effecting his designs, God may be constantly employing the agency of angels in accordance with the established laws of the material universe, and of the spirits of men. In the case of Joseph, his circumstances were such that he needed special guidance from heaven; no human being was adequate to guide him. Thus situated, he had a remarkable

these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

21 And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall

dream. The dream was attended with such circumstances and such special impressions on his mind, that he could not reasonably doubt its having proceeded from God. The dream might have been suggested to his mind by an angel commissioned from above. A message from God, such as was now communicated to Joseph, would accord with his former confidence in the piety of Mary, and with the entire absence of any feeling of guilt on her part; and when he learned from Mary the circumstances related at full length by Luke (1: 26—56), he might well acknowledge the hand of God, and regard the dream as a special event, arranged for relieving his mind, and for leading him in the path of duty, and as excited in his mind by one of those heavenly messengers who are prompt in obeying the will of their Lord.

That dreams were in former times among the means employed in communicating the knowledge of God's will, or of future events, to men, appears to be sustained by the Scriptures. The dreams of Joseph, as related in Gen. 37: 5—7, 9, and of the officers of Pharaoh, in Gen. 40, occupied a very special place in the order of events. Examine also Numb. 12: 6, and Job 33: 14—17. In the second chapter of Matthew, there is repeated mention of information from above being made in the same way. But the circumstances of men in those ancient times were so different from ours, that we are not at liberty to regard our dreams as proceeding from God, with the intention of making known to us his will. There are other ways in which we can acquire knowledge of our duty. || *Thou son of David.* In the existing circumstances of Joseph, and with special reference to the object for which the divine communication was made to him, this appellation was peculiarly appropriate. It was in harmony with the design to impress Joseph with the belief that Mary was about to become the mother of the Messiah, as it was a distinct recognition of Joseph's descent from David —an important circumstance in regard to the husband of the Messiah's mother. || *Is of the Holy Ghost.* Compare Luke 1: 35.

This extraordinary creation of the human nature of Jesus Christ is no more incredible than the creation of Adam and Eve, as related in the book of Genesis. That it was supernatural, is true; but that He, who established the laws of nature, can produce an effect either *in accordance* with those laws, or in a manner *above* them, is also true. The redemption of apostate sinners was certainly a very special case; and it is not surprising that the measures preparatory to this very special object should be themselves distinguished by some peculiarity. Nor was it at all unworthy in the Divine Being thus manifestly and miraculously to interpose in reference to so wonderful an object. Nor may it be unsuitable to remark, that, as he who stood at the head of the human family in regard to the first creation, was in a peculiar sense the product of creating power, so he who was to be the head of the new, the spiritual creation, was also in a peculiar sense the product of the same creating power.

21. *Thou shalt call his name Jesus; for he shall save.* Among the Jews, names, besides distinguishing one individual from another, were often otherwise significant. They were sometimes suggested by some remarkable circumstances connected with the child or the family, or by some revealed design of God in connection

save his people from their sins.

22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,

23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth

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with the birth of the child. Hagar's child (Gen. 16: 11) was to be named Ishmael, "because," as the angel said, "*the Lord hath heard* thy affliction." The name is compounded of two words, which in Hebrew signify *God will hear*. Compare Gen. 41: 51, 52. Ex. 2: 10. 18: 3, 4. Names were sometimes given as intimations of some design of God to be hereafter accomplished. See Hosea 1: 4, 6, 9. Compare Is. 8: 3, 4. In accordance with this custom, the son who was to be born to Mary, was to be named Jesus. To understand the meaning of this name, we must trace it back to the Hebrew language, from which it was derived. The word which is the root of this name, means *to save*. Sometimes the word which signifies *God*, and sometimes a part of the word corresponding to *Jehovah*, was used in connection with another word to compose a name. This is the case in the present instance; and the word properly means, *The* Lord *will save*. It was to be given to the son of Mary, because he was to be the Saviour, divinely appointed to deliver his people from their sins.

This name is the same as that which is called in the Old Testament *Joshua*. In Num. 13: 8, mention is made of Oshea, the son of Nun. The word *Oshea*, when regarded according to its etymology, signifies *salvation*. In the same chapter of Numbers (v. 16), it is related that Moses changed the name *Oshea* to the name *Jehoshua*. The alteration was made, so far as the letters of the word in the original are concerned, by merely prefixing a part of the word which expresses Jehovah. Thus, to the idea of salvation, or deliverance, was added the idea, that the salvation proceeded from Jehovah. The words *Joshua* [the same as *Jehoshua*, only abbreviated] then, and *Jesus*, are the same in signification; namely, *Saviour*, or, *The* Lord *will save*. The difference in the manner of spelling and sounding *Joshua* and *Jesus* arises from the different powers of the Hebrew language, and of the Greek; *Joshua* being the sound more conformed to the Hebrew, and *Jesus* to the Greek. I observe here, in passing, that in two passages of the New Testament (Acts 7: 45, and Heb. 4: 8), the word *Jesu* means the *Joshua* of the Old Testament. The name *Joshua* could not be expressed in the Greek language more nearly than by the word *Jesus*. ‖ *His people*. The Jews supposed that the Messiah was coming with special reference to their being rescued from an abject condition, and regarded themselves as *his people*. But this communication to Joseph, coming from heaven, must be considered as referring to the real object of the Messiah, and to the relation which he was to sustain to others besides the Jews. He was to be the Spiritual Redeemer and Lord of men. His people, then, are those who acknowledge his government and rely on him for spiritual blessings. These he will deliver *from their sins*. The new dispensation was specially designed to effect a change in the inward characters of men, and, by making them holy, to deliver them from the just consequences of sin, particularly in eternity.

22, 23. *That it might be fulfilled*, &c. The subject thus far spoken of, was of a most extraordinary character; and the result which was to flow from those events, was also very extraordinary. The evangelist regarded the event announced by the angel, as a striking fulfilment of certain prophetic language which had been used on a former occasion. The language used on that former occa-

a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which, being interpreted, is, God with us.

sion was singularly applicable to the circumstances which he was relating; it might be applied to them with a greater fulness and particularity, than to the occasion which first called it forth. It was spoken by Isaiah (7 : 14) to king Ahaz, when the king and all his people were filled with terror, in view of an invasion threatened by the confederated kings of Israel and Syria. Isaiah was directed by the Lord to go to Ahaz, and bid him dismiss his fears, because the design of the confederated kings should not be accomplished. He was commissioned, moreover, to assure Ahaz, that Syria had already arrived to the height of its power; that it would be allowed to make no such addition to its power as the conquest of Jerusalem would be; and that the kingdom of Israel was already on the wane, and within sixty-five years would be wholly broken up. Ahaz might, therefore, set his mind at rest, and place unshaken confidence in God. It was then proposed to him to ask some particular token from the Lord, as an assurance of what God had promised. On his declining to select a sign, the prophet himself was directed by the Lord to mention one; namely, that a certain virgin should soon become the mother of a son, and should call his name *Emmanuel;* and that before this child should be old enough to refuse the evil and to choose the good, the kings of Israel and Syria should both be cut off.

The language, then, here quoted from Isaiah, had reference, probably, at first, to the deliverance of Jerusalem from the threatened invasion. The history of those times, as related in the Old Testament, agrees with this view. In 2 Kings 15 : 29, 30, it is related that "in the days of Pekah, king of Israel [the same as mentioned by Isaiah], came Tiglath-pileser, king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-bethmaacha, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria. And Hoshea, the son of Elah, made a conspiracy against Pekah, the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him." In the 16th chapter of the same book, it is also related, that Tiglath-pileser, "king of Assyria, went up against Damascus [the chief city of Syria], and took it, and carried the people of it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin" [who is mentioned by Isaiah]. The death of these kings occurred shortly after their attempt upon Jerusalem. Thus the language of Isaiah appears to have had reference to events that were speedily to take place; and, thus understood, it was happily adapted to the circumstances of Ahaz and his people.

But it may be asked, How could the name *Emmanuel* be given to the son whose birth was predicted, if there was nothing uncommon in his nature? This inquiry is answered by referring to a usual practice, among the ear Jews, of giving to children names significant of some circumstance or event, and of employing the name of God in compounding names for children. In the case spoken of by Isaiah, the nation was in dread of an invasion from powerful confederated foes; and in view of their danger, their hearts trembled like the leaves of a forest. But they were encouraged to be quiet, because God was on their side; and to the child whose birth was foretold, a name was to be given significant of the promised interposition of God. Other names in the Jewish nation were compounded of some common word, and of the name of God; as, for instance, *Joshua, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel,* &c.

The use which Matthew has made of this passage, has led to the belief that Isaiah really predicted in those words the birth of Jesus Christ; and the language of Matthew does certainly, at first sight, appear to favor this belief. It is proper, then, to inquire whether the language of Mat

24 Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:

thew necessarily leads to this view of the passage quoted from Isaiah. In prosecuting this inquiry, we must consider in what ways the sacred writers employ the word *fulfil*. In reading the Scriptures, we are prone to regard this word, as used in its strict sense, to express an accomplishment of a direct prophecy. But it is also employed with a wider signification, and is as extensive in meaning as our word *fulfil*, used in common conversation, or in ordinary books. Now, we often use the word as expressing a *remarkable similarity* in one event to another, or a striking similarity in certain events to certain language with which we are familiar. Such an event, we may say, *fulfils* such a saying; while yet, when the saying was first expressed, that event was not thought of. In some passages of the New Testament, this word does express the real accomplishment of a direct prophecy. In other passages, it merely expresses resemblance, more or less exact, between two events, or between language in the Old Testament and an event recorded in the New; so that the language employed in the Old Testament with reference to a particular event, might also be happily applied to a different event recorded in the New. Sometimes the resemblance between the event spoken of in the Old Testament and that related in the New, is so striking, and the resemblance between accompanying circumstances in each event is so remarkable, that the language employed in the Old Testament would seem to be more fully and exactly applicable to the event recorded in the New. Among the instances of these different meanings of the word *fulfil*, Mark 15: 28, compared with Isaiah 53: 12, may be mentioned, as an accomplishment of a direct prophecy. As instances of resemblance, see Matt. 2: 15, compared with Hos. 11: 1; and Matt. 2: 17, 18, compared with Jer. 31: 15. In this last instance, there is so striking a resemblance, that the language employed by Jeremiah might be regarded as more applicable to the event related by Matthew, than to the event spoken of by Jeremiah; that is, the language might be considered as more fully and exactly adapted to the event related by Matthew. And yet the connection in which Jeremiah has introduced it, clearly shows that he did not have in mind, nor predict, the event to which Matthew applies it.

The verse under consideration is another instance of very striking resemblance; so striking, indeed, is the resemblance, that what was done in the Old Testament times might be represented as done again in a more full and exact manner. And the language used in reference to the event in the Old Testament might be regarded as applicable, in a more full and striking manner, to the event related in the New; so that the event related in the New Testament might be considered as *verifying*, or *filling up*, the language used in the Old. Some points of this resemblance may be stated. 1. The Jews were in great distress on account of the imminent danger to which they were exposed. So the whole human race were regarded as in imminent peril, in respect to their eternal welfare. 2. For the deliverance of the Jews, God was about to interpose. So, for the spiritual deliverance of men, God's remarkable interposition was about to be manifested. 3. As a pledge of the interposition for the Jews, a son was soon to be born to one who was then a virgin, and to this son was to be given a name significant of God's protection. So, as the pledge and the agent of the spiritual deliverance for the human family, a son was to be born, miraculously conceived, and to whom a name was assigned, expressive of his being the divinely-appointed Sa-

25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son: and he called his name JESUS.

CHAPTER II.

NOW when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king,

viour. 4. As the son promised in token of the Jews' deliverance from their temporal distress was to be named *Emmanuel*, a name expressing the presence of God among his people, so to the son miraculously conceived, and designed to be the spiritual Saviour of men, was to belong what was really contained in the meaning of the name *Emmanuel;* to him, that name, in all its fulness, would be applicable; and when he should appear on his benevolent errand, most truly and strikingly might he be called "Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is, God with us." Compare 1 Tim. 3 : 16.

25. *Her first-born son.* This term does not necessarily imply that the mother of Jesus had other children afterwards. That she had, however, is a natural construction; and it agrees well with such statements as occur in Matthew 12 : 46, John 2 : 12. The words *brother* and *sister* were indeed sometimes used in a wider signification among the Jews than among us, and included the near relatives of a person; so that nothing certain can be stated on this topic.

PRACTICAL HINTS suggested by this chapter.

1. God is faithful in fulfilling his promises. "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son."

2. How lovely is a kind and merciful disposition! v. 19.

3. In cases of distressing doubt, if we wait patiently, and commit our affairs to God, the path of duty will be made known. Compare Ps. 37 : 5, 6.

4. God frequently honors the lowly in spirit, and makes them instruments of distinguished good to their race. Mary, an obscure Jewish female, becomes the mother of Jesus Christ.

5. Jesus Christ is the Saviour from the dominion and practice of sin, as well as from its consequences. See Titus 2 : 11—14. Do we trust in him as *our* deliverer from sin, endeavoring to regulate our hearts and lives by his precepts, and to follow his example? See 1 Pet. 2 : 21—25.

CHAPTER II.

1. *Bethlehem of Judea.* Bethlehem was a town about six miles south of Jerusalem. It was called *Bethlehem of Judea*, to distinguish it from a town of the same name in the tribe of Zebulun, in the north part of the country. Josh. 19 : 15. Judges 12 : 10. *Judea* was the name, in the time of Christ and some time before, of the southern part of the country. The name *Bethlehem* literally signifies *house of bread;* and was probably indicative of the fertility of the region around. Volney, in his Travels, says, "The soil [of Bethlehem] is the best in all these districts; fruits, vines, olives, and sesamum, succeed here extremely well." It still retains substantially its ancient name, and contains about two hundred houses. It was also named *Ephrath* (Gen. 35 : 19. 48 : 7), a name also indicative of fertility. It was the birthplace of king David (1 Sam. 17 : 12); hence in Luke 2 : 4, 11, it is called *the city of David.* How it happened that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, while his mother's residence was *Nazareth* in Galilee, Luke explains in 2 : 1—7. ‖ *Herod the king.* At the time when Jesus was born, the whole country of the Jews, as well as the neighboring regions, was under the dominion of the Romans. The family to which Herod belonged stood high in favor with the Roman government, and at last he was established king of the Jewish nation, though he was not a Jew by birth. His power was very considerable, yet he was dependent on the Roman em-

behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

3 When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and

peror. The name *Herod* was borne by some others, his descendants, who had rule, after him, over parts of his territory. The one here mentioned is distinguished by being called *Herod the Great*. ‖ *Wise men from the east.* A more exact representation of the word translated *wise men*, would have been *Magi*, or *Magians*. It was a word appropriated to a certain class of men among the people east of Palestine, such as priests, philosophers, &c., who devoted themselves to the study of astronomy, astrology, and medicine, and were held in high estimation among their countrymen. The Magians here spoken of probably came from Arabia; the presents which they brought agree better with this opinion than with any other. ‖ *To Jerusalem;* the chief city of the Jews. Such was the business on which they went, that they would most naturally go immediately to the metropolis.

2. *King of the Jews.* It is the testimony of ancient credible historians, that, about the time of our Lord's birth, there prevailed very generally in the eastern parts of the world an expectation of some illustrious king, who was shortly to appear. This expectation is, probably, to be traced to the belief which the Jews universally cherished of the coming of the Messiah. The Jews had been widely dispersed, and wherever they went, they carried their sacred books, and adhered firmly to the belief of the nation. ‖ *His star in the east.* That is, we, being in the east, have seen his star. They noticed a new celestial luminary; being attracted by its appearance, and noticing the particular quarter of the heavens in which it appeared, and its apparent motion, they connected it with the current expectation of some illustrious king, and were induced to direct their steps to Jerusalem. What this *star* was, we have no means of determining. It was an uncommon luminous appearance in the heavens, prepared by the special providence of God for this particular occasion, and just such an appearance as was suited to call the attention of these men, and guide them to the new-born king. ‖ *To worship him.* There is no evidence that the Magians had correct notions respecting the real character of the new-born king of the Jews, or of the design of God in his birth. They probably regarded him as one who was destined to acquire most extensive sway, and they came, on the first intimation of his appearance, to pay him respect. They were impelled, perhaps, by the desire so common among men, to see any thing remarkable, or to bespeak, by this early homage, his favor, in future, for their nation. The word *worship* was applicable, when our translation was made, to men as well as to God, and, in reference to men, signified the respect and courtesy paid by an inferior to a superior. For this meaning of the word *worship*, see Luke 14: 10.

3. *He was troubled, and all Jerusalem.* Herod was at this time about seventy years of age. But the unsubdued jealousy of his temper led him to forebode evil to himself, or to his son who should succeed him. The expression "*all* Jerusalem was troubled," means, just as such language would mean among us, that there was in the city a *general* excitement. This excitement was of a painful character. Herod's friends and adherents were disturbed for the same reasons which excited anxiety in his mind; and others feared the commission of new cruelties on the part of Herod, for he was one of the most unreasonable and cruel tyrants that ever occupied a throne.

4. *Chief priests and scribes of the peo-*

scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet,

6 And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

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ple; probably that collection of chief priests and scribes who composed the Sanhedrim. The Sanhedrim was the highest ecclesiastical and civil court of the Jews, and was believed to combine the wisdom of the nation. The chief priests who belonged to it, were, besides the acting high priest, those who had previously exercised the high priesthood, and those who were heads of the twenty-four classes into which the priests had long before been divided. See Luke 1 : 5. The scribes were men esteemed for their acquaintance with the law of Moses, and the traditions that had been handed down, to the study and teaching of which they devoted themselves. See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, III. 3. page xvi. On a question pertaining peculiarly to the Jewish nation, this was the body of men whom Herod would of course consult. ‖ *Christ*, more properly, *the Christ;* that is, the Messiah. The distinguished personage whom the Jews were expecting, they called *the Messiah*. This is a title of office, not a proper name, originally, of an individual. Its meaning is, *the anointed one*. The term arose from the practice of anointing with oil the high priests (see Ex. 29 : 4—7. Lev. 8 : 12. 21 : 10), and the kings, at least those who were the first in their family that bore the office, or those whose right to the succession could be disputed. See 1 Kings 1 : 34. 2 Kings 11 : 12. Now, to the Hebrew term, *the Messiah*, the Greek term, *the Christ*, corresponds exactly, as to its radical signification; and the Jewish title of office, *the Messiah*, might have been happily used in this verse. The name *Jesus*, we have seen, had a signification, besides being a proper name; so the word *Christ*, which afterwards came to be applied to our Lord as a proper name, had a significancy pointing to his official dignity, and to the interesting relation which he was to sustain to his people as king (John 18 : 37) and high priest (Heb. 7 : 24—28).

5, 6. *By the prophet;* Micah 5 : 2. The name *Bethlehem Ephratah*, employed by Micah, is explained by the note on the first verse of this chapter; *Ephratah* being the same as *Ephrath*. ‖ *Princes of Judah;* that is, officers, distinguished men. The prophet Micah uses the term *thousands of Israel;* the word *thousands* having reference to a civil division of the people, such as is meant in 1 Sam. 10 : 19. 23 : 23. The heads, or chief officers, of such divisions, were called *heads of thousands*. Num. 1 : 16. 10 : 4. We may understand Micah, then, as speaking directly of these divisions, while Matthew speaks of the heads of such divisions; that is, officers or rulers. ‖ *My people Israel*. Until the time of Rehoboam, the name *Israel* was applied to the twelve tribes regarded as one people. From that time till the captivity, the ten tribes which seceded and followed Jeroboam, were called, by way of distinction, *Israel* (1 Kings 12 : 16, &c.); the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, were called *Judah*. But after the Babylonian captivity, the original practice was resumed, and the general appellation *Israel* was given to those who acknowledged Jacob, that is, Israel, as their common ancestor.

There is a slight verbal difference between the verse as given by Matthew and as originally written by Micah. This is sufficiently explained by the fact, that Matthew doubtless intended merely to give the idea conveyed by the prophet. Micah speaks

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem; and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found *him*, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed: and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.

14 When he arose, he took

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of Bethlehem as being a small place in point of civil distinction, but yet a place to be greatly distinguished by the appearing there of a distinguished ruler. On this last thought the mind of Matthew rested, and he speaks of Bethlehem as not being small, inasmuch as a distinguished ruler was to proceed from it.

8. *Worship.* This word has the same meaning here as in the second verse. We cannot fail to notice the hypocrisy of Herod.

9. *In the east;* not in a direction east from them, but which they had before seen while in the eastern country.

11. *Presented unto him gifts.* In eastern countries, those who called upon kings and other distinguished men, brought presents. Compare Gen. 43: 11. 1 Kings 10: 2. Ps. 72: 10. ‖ *Frankincense;* a valuable transparent gum, procured by incision from a tree found in Arabia ‖ *Myrrh;* an aromatic resinous substance, issuing by incision, and sometimes spontaneously, from a tree growing in Arabia. It was in abundant use among the ancients for anointing and perfuming. It was also used for anointing the dead. See John 19: 39.

12. *In a dream.* See on 1: 20.

13. *Flee into Egypt.* Egypt was at this time a Roman province, and many Jews had taken up their abode there. It lay south-west from Bethlehem, a short distance, which could probably be travelled over by Joseph's family in three or four days. By retiring to Egypt, they would be beyond Herod's jurisdiction; and yet might be among Jews, who would sympathize with them. How kind, too, was the arrangement of providence, which sent the Magians [the wise men] with presents! thus furnishing them with articles that might readily be converted into means of subsistence and comfort.

the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:

15 And was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

15. *Until the death of Herod.* How long the family remained in Egypt cannot be precisely ascertained. It was, however, but a short time. Herod is believed to have died in the second year of our Lord. ‖ *By the prophet.* Hosea 11: 1. The prophet in this passage merely makes a declaration of God's kind dealings towards the nation of Israel, whom he delivered from bondage in Egypt, and whom as a nation he affectionately called *his son.* But now that Jesus, who was in the highest sense his son, was by a divine monition conveyed to Egypt, the language which was formerly used in reference to the nation of Israel was to be verified, or fulfilled, in a higher and more remarkable sense. That language was applicable to the case of Jesus more fully and appropriately, so that the event which the evangelist was relating, could be happily expressed in those same words. There was, then, a striking resemblance between the language of the prophet and this event in the history of Jesus; and thus this event might be regarded as filling out that language. An examination of the passage in Hosea will show, that it is not a prophecy of this event in the life of Jesus; and the word *fulfil* is here used in the wide sense in which we often employ it in ordinary life. It points out the striking resemblance between language in the Old Testament and an event in the history of Jesus.

16. *Mocked.* The word *mock* now means to *mimic*, to *imitate in a way of contempt.* But in the Bible it means to *treat disrespectfully*, to *trifle with.* Herod felt that he had been trifled with, deluded, and defeated. ‖ *All the children.* The original Greek, and the circumstances of the case, make it appear probable that it was only the *male* children whom he ordered to be put to death. ‖ *The coasts thereof;* the places bordering on Bethlehem.

In respect to the number of infants put to death on this occasion, it is impossible to speak with certainty. Bethlehem was rather an inconsiderable town as to population, and the families bordering upon it were probably few. One of the modern travellers states the present population at three hundred, and is inclined to think the population formerly did not much exceed that number. But if we estimate it at one thousand, the number of male children of the ages mentioned would doubtless fall short of fifty. Fifty is sometimes stated as the highest number; the number of ten, or twelve, is frequently stated as the most probable. But our judgment of Herod's conduct must not be regulated so much by the number of children put to death, as by the nature of the act and the motive which influenced him. This act, cruel as it was, corresponded to other deeds of Herod. He put to death a brother-in-law, one of his own wives, and three of his children; and when expecting his own death, he ordered that several principal men of the Jewish nation, who were for this purpose confined in Jericho, should be killed as soon as it should be known that he himself had died, so that there might be mourning at his death. This cruel order was not, however, obeyed. Josephus, the Jewish historian, in summing up the character of Herod, says, "He was a man universally cruel, and of an ungovernable anger."

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither:

17, 18. *Jeremy;* that is, Jeremiah. See Jer. 31: 15. ‖ *Rama;* the name of a city a few miles north of Jerusalem. ‖ *Rachel;* one of Israel's wives, and mother of Joseph and Benjamin. See Gen. 30: 22—24. Rachel died and was buried not far from Ephrath (Gen. 35: 16—19), that is, Bethlehem. Bethlehem was about six miles south of Jerusalem, and Rama a few miles north. In the passage quoted, the prophet poetically represents Rachel as sorely distressed at the going away of her descendants into captivity; sympathizing with them in their woes, she mingles her voice with theirs, and would not admit consolation. The distress thus poetically described, Matthew represents as again endured by her, in view of the calamities now experienced in Bethlehem. Those calamities occasioned a general and wide-spread mourning; the deep distress in the families of Bethlehem could not better be described than by adopting the language of Jeremiah, in reference to a preceding state of calamity and mourning. The distress, which fell so unexpectedly, so unreasonably, so cruelly, upon helpless babes and sorrowing families, was of no ordinary character. And well might the evangelist, while recording this act of unheard-of cruelty, summon to his aid the strong poetic representation of the prophet, and regard the prophet's language as still more applicable, and still more fully verified, on this occasion, than on the one to which it originally referred. Well might he feel that this heart-rending event did really fill up that language.

20. *Land of Israel;* country of the Jews. See on v. 6. ‖ *They are dead.* Herod's partisans doubtless partook of his spirit in regard to any one who might be supposed able to interfere with their honors. Others besides Herod had died, from whom evil might have been apprehended.

22. *Archelaus.* Herod the Great had, in his last will, appointed Archelaus his successor in the government. He, accordingly, on the death of Herod, repaired to Rome, to procure from Augustus, the emperor, a confirmation of the arrangement which his father had made. But his brother Antipas disputed his title, since Herod had, in a previous will, appointed him to be his successor. The result was, that Archelaus was established in the government of a part of his father's dominions, namely, Judea, Idumea, which was partly in the south of Judea, partly further south, and Samaria, three cities excepted, with the title of ethnarch; Antipas, that is, Herod Antipas, was constituted tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. Perea was the southern part of the country on the east of the Jordan. Archelaus proved to be a very cruel ruler, and after a few years was banished from his government by Augustus. He died in

notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

CHAPTER III.

IN those days came John the Baptist, preaching in

exile. ‖ *Galilee.* The Jewish territory on the west of the Jordan was divided into three parts — Galilee on the north, Samaria in the middle, and Judea at the south. Joseph retired with his family to Galilee; for this was beyond the jurisdiction of Archelaus.

23. *Nazareth;* a town in the southern part of Galilee, and the former place of Mary's residence. See Luke 1: 26. ‖ *By the prophets,* &c. The expression which follows cannot be found in any of the books of the Old Testament. Nor does Matthew intimate that any one prophet in particular had used this expression concerning the Messiah. He is rather to be understood as saying, that what he is about to express accorded with prophetic declarations respecting him. In order fully to understand the evangelist in this place, it should be considered that Nazareth appears to have been regarded, by the people of Judea, in a contemptuous manner. See John 1: 46. From John 7: 52, it appears, that the whole district of Galilee, in which Nazareth was situated, was viewed in an unfavorable light. Hence, "*to be a Nazarene,*" was a phrase implying reproach. The expressions *Jesus of Galilee* and *Jesus of Nazareth,* in Matt. 26: 69, 71, were probably meant as terms of reproach. Now, it had been predicted that the coming Saviour would be "despised and rejected of men." See Is. 53: 2, 3. Instead, then, of simply saying he would be an object of reproach, Matthew uses an expression of the same import, suggested by the circumstance of his abode being in Nazareth — *he shall be called a Nazarene.*

TOPICS FOR REFLECTION suggested by this chapter.

1. Prophecy was remarkably fulfilled in respect to the birthplace of Jesus Verse 1 compared with v. 6. The fulfilment of prophecy is a strong evidence of the divine inspiration of the Scriptures.

2. The Eastern Magi treated the infant Messiah with distinguished respect. What reverence ought *we* to cherish towards him, having so superior knowledge of his character!

3. How vain it is to attempt defeating the purposes of God! v. 13. He makes even the wrath of man to praise him. Compare Ps. 76: 10.

4. Notice the extreme cruelty to which a sinful heart may prompt. v. 16. Comp. Ex. 1: 22. 2 Kings 8: 11—15.

5. In every exigency, God will provide for those who trust in him. vs. 11, 13, 22.

6. What changes God effects! Egypt, from being the place of oppression to the Lord's people, becomes a place of refuge and protection for the infant Messiah from cruelties in his native land.

CHAPTER III.

1. *In those days.* A new scene now opens before us. The evangelist, having related what took place in the early infancy of Jesus up to the time of the family's becoming again established in Nazareth, passes over a very considerable period in the life of Jesus. During that period, he lived in comparative obscurity, and was not occupied in matters pertaining to the public discharge of his office as Messiah. This period occupied a space of between twenty-five and thirty years. See Luke 3: 23. How Jesus was occupied during this time, we are not informed. The only circumstance particularly related, in regard to this period, is his visit to Jerusalem with his parents, at the age of twelve years. See Luke 2: 41—51. There

the wilderness of Judea,
2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

is also a general remark made by Luke (2:52), which shows that Jesus, while advancing in age, manifested much intellectual capacity and piety. From Matt. 13:55, it would appear that Joseph, his reputed father, was, by trade, a carpenter; and from Mark 6:3, that Jesus himself wrought at the same occupation. His dignity consisted in innocence and holiness of character, and in performing a work which should glorify God by bringing countless multitudes to holiness and happiness. This portion of his life, however, was by no means destitute of an important bearing on his official work. He came to be the Redeemer of *men;* it was therefore suitable that he should know, by experience, how to sympathize with human beings in the ordinary circumstances of life, as well as with respect to their eternal interests. Heb. 2:11, 14, 17, 18. Besides, the Jews maintained, that every man, whatever his station or his prospects, ought to be able to follow some trade.

The expression *in those days* is a general one, referring to some past time, without intending to connect, in point of time, a following account with events just related. It here carries us back to the early period of the Christian history. The same phrase, used in a similar manner, occurs in Ex. 2:11. ‖ *John the Baptist;* that is, the baptizer. John was distinguished from all preceding religious teachers by his administering of baptism in reference to the Messiah. The administering of baptism, with this reference, to those whom he deemed suitable persons to receive it, was an important part of his commission. For a full account of the circumstances connected with the birth of John, see Luke 1:5—25, 57—80. ‖ *Preaching;* proclaiming. We are not to think of John as delivering formal discourses to established and well-regulated audiences; but as traversing the country, announcing the approach of the Messiah, and calling on the people to prepare for his coming, by a suitable reformation of heart and life. ‖ *The wilderness of Judea.* Judea was the southern part of Palestine, or the Holy Land. See the Map. The term *wilderness* in the Bible has not exactly the same meaning as that in which we use it. We express by it a region not yet inhabited, perhaps uninhabitable by civilized men; occupied rather by wild beasts than by civilized human beings. In the Scriptures, this word, as also the similar word *desert*, is applied to certain regions, as distinguishing them from more thickly-peopled places; somewhat as our word *country* is used in distinction from *city* or *village*. John was traversing the country parts of Judea. These thinly-settled tracts received names from places near them. The wilderness of Judea, here mentioned, was so called because it commenced in the territory of Judea. It was sometimes called *the Great Desert*, on account of its extent; commencing at the city of Tekoa, six miles south of Bethlehem, it extended to the east as far as the Persian Gulf, and very far northward along the river Euphrates.

2. *Repent.* This word signifies that true reformation of heart and life, that becoming truly pious, which would be adapted to the design of the Saviour's coming, and would be a suitable preparation for his approach. By the prophet Malachi (4:5, 6), it was foretold that the Messiah would be preceded by a distinguished messenger, whose official business would be to attempt a general reformation among the Jews. John was that messenger. Matt. 11:14. 17:10—13. In pursuance of his commission, he now began summoning the people to true repentance, that they might be ready for the coming Messiah. See Luke 1:17. ‖ *The kingdom of heaven.* This expression is of the same import as the expression *king-*

3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

dom of God, used by the other evangelists. The meaning of this phrase must be gathered from the language of prophecy respecting the Messiah, and from some of the views which the Jews were entertaining in regard to him. He was spoken of by the prophets as a king, who was to have a glorious and everlasting dominion. Micah 5 : 2. Dan. 7 : 13, 14. Is. 9 : 6, 7. His administration was to be singularly equitable and prosperous. Is. 11 : 1—9. Micah 4 : 1—4. So different from the administration of ordinary kings was to be his reign, and so eminently distinguished above them, that, in a peculiar sense, his reign was to be a reign of God; during his administration it might well be said, that God reigns upon earth. The expression, then, *reign of heaven*, or *reign of God*, or, as our version translates, *kingdom of heaven*, would at once be understood by the Jews as meaning the Messiah's administration, the glorious times in which the long-expected personage would appear and assume his royal authority. They had, indeed, mistaken the true nature of this authority, and were not expecting a spiritual reign, a reign, in their hearts, of the principles of piety and integrity. Still, they would regard this language as an announcement of the Messiah's approach; and John's official object was, to draw their attention to their spiritual state, to lead them to repentance, and thus to effect a true preparation for his coming. Such is the very usual meaning of the phrase *kingdom of heaven*. It has, also, other meanings, intimately connected, however, with this; and these meanings are, in general, sufficiently well pointed out by the connection in which the phrase occurs.

Observe, here, this requisition of repentance and a holy life, enforced at the commencement of Christianity, is still made of all who would enjoy the spiritual benefits which the Messiah bestows. This requisition results from the very nature of the gospel, and can never cease.

3. *Esaias;* the Greek method of expressing the name *Isaiah*. The passage referred to in this verse, occurs in Is. 40 : 3. The imagery employed is drawn from the practice of ancient Oriental monarchs, who, when on a march, sent before them suitable persons to put the roads and all things in readiness, so that their progress might not be impeded. Thus John the Baptist went before the Messiah, to announce his coming, and to lead the people to a suitable preparation for receiving him. In the case of the Eastern monarchs, preparation consisted in levelling hills, and filling valleys, and removing all obstructions to their march. The preparation for the Messiah must be, of course, adapted to his character and object; and it would consist in obeying the call to repentance.

The language of Isaiah, here applied to John the Baptist, is also applied, in a similar manner, by Mark (1: 3); and by Luke (3 : 4—6); also by John the Baptist himself (John 1: 23). The passage, however, when read in its original connection, appears to be a prediction of Jehovah's coming to deliver his people, the Jews, from their captivity in Babylon. It is probable that the prophetic view of the future, which Isaiah enjoyed, included a series of events embracing the temporal deliverance of the Lord's people from captivity, and the spiritual deliverance of his true people by the coming of the Messian. The language, which was appropriate to the whole series thus presented to the prophet's mind, was also appropriate to the different parts of the series; and hence, in the progress of fulfilment, it was applicable to the appearing of John the Baptist as the forerunner of the Messiah.

4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins: and his meat was locusts and wild honey.

5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan,

6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees

4. *Camel's hair.* The hair of the camel, which was shed every year, was manufactured into a coarse cloth, which constituted the clothing of the poorer class of people. In Zech. 13: 4, there seems to be an intimation that dress of an inferior quality was usual among the ancient prophets. ‖ *Leathern girdle.* Such a girdle Elijah wore. 2 Kings 1: 8. The dress worn at that time was loose and flowing; and when persons went abroad, they used a girdle, which was bound around the loins. The girdle made of leather was an ordinary one. It was sometimes made of cotton, sometimes of silk. ‖ *Meat.* This word, now applied solely to animal food, was formerly of more general signification, like the word *food.* ‖ *Locusts.* In Eastern countries, locusts are roasted, and sometimes boiled, for the use of the common people. They are salted and preserved, and used as occasion requires. The inhabitants of Palestine, as well as the other Orientals, have always been accustomed to make several species of the locust an article of food. See Lev. 11: 22. ‖ *Wild honey.* This was probably not the honey of bees, but what is called *honey-dew* — a sweet substance, found very plentifully on the leaves of trees in some Oriental countries.

Thus, both in regard to clothing and to food, John lived in an austere and self-denying manner; using such food and clothing as were comparatively mean and easily procured. Compare Matt. 11: 8—18. NOTICE here, that an exterior garb of poverty may be consistent with rare excellence in the sight of God. Compare v. 4 with Matt. 11: 11.

5. *Jerusalem;* the metropolis of the Jewish nation, situated, as the Map shows, in that part of the land called *Judea.* ‖ *Judea.* See on 3: 1. ‖ *Jordan;* the river so named. By inspecting the Map, it will be seen that the Jordan is the principal river of Palestine. It rises in the northern part of the country, and pursues a southerly course, with various windings, till it empties into the Dead Sea. ‖ *The region round about Jordan;* the country lying along the Jordan, on each side. The meaning of the sacred writer, in the whole verse, is, that great multitudes from the several places mentioned, repaired to John; not that every individual from all these places went; just as we say, *the whole world* knows some particular thing, when we mean that it is a matter of common notoriety; or, *the whole city* was in commotion, when we mean that multitudes of the citizens were excited.

6. *In Jordan;* that is, more properly, and more strictly in accordance with the original, *in the Jordan.* ‖ *Confessing their sins.* John required repentance in those who would be baptized by him. See v. 8. Hence, in Mark 1: 4, he is said to have preached "the baptism of repentance," that is, baptism, which implied repentance on the part of the persons baptized, and which was a special method of acknowledging their repentance. Consequently, confession of sin was required. Those who were baptized by John, were understood, by that act, to indicate themselves as penitents, professing to enter on a new life, and thus to be preparing for the Messiah.

7. *Pharisees and Sadducees.* These were the two principal sects among the Jews in the time of John and of Jesus. For an account of them, see the INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, at the beginning of this work, III. 1

come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

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and 2. page xv. It may here be observed, that they were men of distinction, expecting the Messiah, in common with the great body of the nation. As the people in general were attracted towards John, and many were receiving baptism from him in reference to the coming of the Messiah, they too, doubtless from wrong motives, such as a love of popularity, and a wish not to lose their hold upon the people, requested baptism. John, discerning their duplicity, and struck with the inconsistency of such men as they, who prided themselves upon their superior sanctity, seeking admission to an ordinance which spoke of sin, and repentance, and confession, promptly declined their request. || *Generation of vipers;* offspring of vipers. The viper was a figure of a hypocritical and injurious man. See Matt. 12: 34. 23: 33. These men made great pretensions to piety, but they were really destitute of piety, and were injurious to the people. || *Who hath warned you?* You, who make such professions of strict piety, and so rigidly enforce obedience upon others, who has undertaken to warn you? Have you come hither, under the influence of such warning, to amend your lives, and to seek deliverance from the punishment due to sinners? Or have you come in a hypocritical manner, seeking to maintain your reputation among the people, while yet you feel not your need of repentance? || *The wrath to come;* the punishment with which the sins of the people were to be visited. The expression is general, and includes whatever miseries should befall the people in consequence of their sins, both in this world and in the world to come. When Malachi (4: 5, 6) had predicted that a messenger would precede the Messiah, in order to effect a general reformation, he made it distinctly known, that, unless such a reformation as was adapted to the Messiah's object should take place, God would smite the people with a curse.

8. *Fruits.* This word, as applied to men, is equivalent to the term *conduct* or *course of life.* || *Meet for repentance;* consistent with repentance, or suited to repentance. Let your lives henceforth be such as will be consistent with repentance, and suitable for persons who profess reformation of heart and life. John prescribes the same rule which the Saviour afterwards so distinctly maintained (Matt. 7: 20)—*By their fruits ye shall know them.* Let us never forget, that a merely external profession of piety is utterly valueless.

9. *Think not to say;* that is, Say not. A similar manner of speaking is found, in the original, in Mark 10: 42—"they which are accounted to rule;" which thought is expressed in Matt. 20: 25, by the term "*the princes*," that is, *those who rule.* || *Abraham to our father;* Abraham *for*, or *as*, our father. The Jews, especially the Pharisees, placed great reliance on their being descended from Abraham. They regarded it as almost a matter of course, that they, as children of Abraham, possessed the favor of God, and would enjoy the blessings of the Messiah's administration. The ground of acceptance they considered to be, the merits of Abraham, circumcision, and the offering of sacrifices. || *Of these stones.* John endeavored to correct the erroneous notions which were so current, and to show that natural descent does not communicate good desert, and cannot be of avail as to acquiring an

10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

11 I indeed baptize you with

interest in the blessings of the new dispensation. Descent from Abraham was hereafter to be regarded as of little importance; personal repentance was demanded. God was not dependent on the Jews for acquiring suitable subjects for the Messiah's reign; the most unlikely materials he could mould, so as to answer his purposes. The very stones on the Jordan's bank, he could transform, if he saw fit, into human beings, possessing characters like Abraham's.

10. *Is laid unto the root;* lies at the root, ready for use. In the Messiah's reign, regard is paid to the real characters of men, not to outward distinctions. The same principles which an owner of trees applies to them, are applied to men. Trees which produce not good fruit, and are, therefore, useless to the proprietor, are cut down and burnt up. So, in the Messiah's dispensation, there is a discrimination according to character. To belong to this dispensation, in respect to its distinguishing benefits, is an individual matter, not a national matter. Decisions are made now according to personal character. The allusion to useless fruit-trees being cut down and used for fuel, would be strongly felt in Palestine, where was very little spare land, and every foot was needed for profitable cultivation. See Luke 13: 6—9. ‖ *Cast into the fire.* As applied to men, this expression necessarily denotes *rejection* and *being doomed to misery.* Let the solemn admonition of John impress us deeply with the sentiment, that the piety of our ancestors, or of our relatives, will not avail for our salvation. Personal piety is required.

11. *With water.* The translation *in water* would be more in accordance with the original. The preposition employed is precisely the same as is used in the sixth verse, and there translated *in.* There is the same propriety in the phrase *I baptize in water,* as in the phrase *They were baptized in the Jordan;* and the same impropriety in saying *baptize with water,* as in saying *baptize with the Jordan.* ‖ *Unto repentance;* as if he had said, The baptism which I administer, implies a profession of repentance, an acknowledgment of your being sinners, and of your obligation and determination to reform your hearts and lives. Those who receive baptism from me, are, by that act, marked as persons professing hearty reformation, and thus waiting for the coming Messiah. Such is the nature of my office.—A proper view of John's office must at once have shown these impenitent Pharisees and Sadducees, that they were not fit subjects for his baptism. The language of John, *I baptize* YOU, does not imply that he had baptized the Pharisees, and all others whom he was addressing. Indeed his remarks clearly imply the contrary; this also appears from Luke 7: 30. His use of the word *you* must be explained by referring to the language of ordinary life. In addressing a collection of people, such an expression would be understood as meaning, *those of you whom I baptize,* &c. ‖ *Unto repentance;* that is, in reference to repentance, as professing the obligation to repentance and the exercise of it.

John, having thus explicitly declared the nature and extent of his office, proceeds to make known, with equal explicitness, the superior dignity of the great Lord of the new dispensation, whose servant he did not feel himself worthy to be. ‖ *He that cometh after me;* that is, the Messiah, whose approach John announced. The whole of John's teaching, and his proclaiming of "the kingdom of heaven," or the reign of the Messiah, would make this expression well understood. ‖ *Mightier than I;* of greater authority and power. ‖ *Whose shoes,* &c.; sandals,

water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:

probably, coverings for the bottom of the feet, bound around the feet with leather straps. As stockings were not worn, the feet would become soiled; and when persons entered a house, the sandals were taken off and laid aside, so that the feet might be washed. This was the office of the lowest servants. John, then, by saying *I am not worthy to bear* [to carry away] *his sandals*, conveyed this idea — I am not worthy to be the most menial servant to so distinguished a personage as the Messiah. The evangelist Mark (1: 7) varies slightly the form of expression, yet retains the same idea. ‖ *He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.* The term *Holy Spirit* is preferable to the term *Holy Ghost*, as the word *ghost* is attended with unpleasant associations in many minds. The word translated *with* would be better rendered *in*; it is the same word, in the original, as is used in the beginning of this verse, and as is translated *in*, in the sixth verse. But what is it *to baptize in the Holy Spirit?* This expression, which has occasioned so much difficulty, would be rendered in a great measure clear, by referring to the radical meaning of the Greek word corresponding to our word *baptize*. Light would also be shed on other passages, if the word *baptize*, in translating, were used only in those places which relate to the ordinance of baptism, and the original meaning of the word were expressed by a corresponding word in other places; or if the primary meaning of the word were kept distinctly in view. The primary, radical meaning of this word in the original is, *to dip, to immerse*. As intimately connected with this primary meaning, the word also expresses the idea of *a most copious imparting*, inasmuch as one who is immersed in a fluid, most copiously partakes of it. To be immersed in the Holy Spirit, then, is to receive a most copious imparting of the Holy Spirit. By the Holy Spirit, we are here to understand those divine influences which were so abundantly imparted to the first Christians, making them truly of one heart, filling them with spiritual consolation, and enabling them, by pious example, and, in many instances, by miraculous operations, to stand forth as witnesses for the truth of Christianity, and preparing them for the glories of heaven. By a reference to the passages which speak of this baptism, or immersion, in the Holy Spirit, what has now been stated as drawn from the meaning of the terms, will be confirmed. In Acts 1: 5, the remark occurs, "John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." The fulfilment of this promise we find in the second chapter of Acts, vs. 2, 4, 17, 18, 33, 38. A most copious imparting of the Holy Spirit's influence was granted, giving new light and courage to the apostles, and enabling them "to speak with other tongues," that is, in other languages than their own. Thus were they baptized [immersed] in the influences of the Holy Spirit. In other words, abundant influences of the Holy Spirit were shed forth upon them, so that they might be said to have been surrounded by those influences.

In Acts 11: 16, again occurs the same declaration of Jesus as we find in Acts 1: 5 — "Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with [in] water; but ye shall be baptized with [immersed in] the Holy Spirit." Immediately before this declaration, and as reminding of what the Lord had said, it is stated, that when Peter began to speak to Cornelius and his company, "the Holy Spirit fell on them as on us at the beginning." The imparting, then, of the Holy Spirit, on this occasion, was the same as baptizing in the Holy Spirit.

12 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

If, now, we turn to Acts 10: 44—47, we shall find that when "the Holy Spirit fell on all them that heard the word" from Peter, they spoke "with tongues," that is, in other languages, "and magnified God"—a striking similarity to what occurred on the day of Pentecost; and clearly showing, that *to be baptized in the Holy Ghost* is, to enjoy a most copious communication of divine influence.

There is another passage, which may be brought into comparison with those already produced. It is in 1 Cor. 12: 13. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body;" the idea of which words seems to be, that, by our copious partaking of divine influences, we have become closely united together, whatever may be our outward distinctions. Here, no allusion is made to the bestowal of miraculous gifts, but to mutual love, and to the mutual participation of the blissful hope which the gospel inspires.

He will baptize you in the Holy Spirit, then, means, he will most copiously impart divine influences, which will be connected with signal bliss on earth, and lead to most distinguished bliss in heaven. ‖ *And with fire;* he will baptize you with fire; that is, he will immerse you in fire. And what is the meaning of this expression? In the verse immediately before this, and in the verse immediately after it, the word *fire* occurs, as meaning *extreme misery*. The word in this verse, then, most naturally has the same signification. In other places, *fire* is used as an emblem of punishment. See Matt. 25: 41. Jude 7. Rev. 20: 14, 15. 21: 8. Mal. 4: 1. To be immersed in fire, then, is to be overwhelmed with misery. The verse thus presents an affecting contrast. John declares, that he himself had a comparatively inferior work to perform; namely, to call the people to repentance, and to baptize those who professed repentance, as a preparation for the Messiah, whose coming he announced. But soon the great Lord of the new dispensation would appear, and that with far greater authority than he possessed; HE would come with power to bestow the rewards, and to inflict the punishments, appropriate to the new dispensation; and, as the result of his coming, on some would be most copiously shed tokens of divine favor, while on others would be most copiously poured tokens of divine indignation.

A similar instance of contrast, in respect to the Messiah, though in less forcible language, occurs in Luke 2: 34: "This child is set for the *fall* and *the rising again* of many in Israel:" that is, he will prove an occasion for the ruin of many, and for the exalted bliss of many, in Israel.

12. In still further urging this thought of separation, as to destiny, between the righteous and the wicked, John draws an illustration from the operations of husbandry, with which his hearers were familiar. In the Eastern countries, the grain, when ripe, is deposited upon the threshing floor, and, after being trodden by cattle, or beaten out, is by the winnowing fan separated from the chaff. The pure kernels, separated from the useless mass, are laid up in the granary; the chaff and the stubble are committed to the flames. A similar award will be made by the Messiah. Discriminating between the characters of men, and administering with perfect rectitude the affairs of the divine kingdom, he will welcome some to bliss, and consign others to remediless woe. See Matt. 25: 31—46. *Fan;* winnowing fan, or shovel, by which the grain, mingled with chaff, was exposed to the wind, so that the chaff was blown away. ‖ *Thoroughly purge his floor;* thoroughly clear off

13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him.

14 But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

15 And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the

his threshing floor. The threshing floor was in some elevated part of the field. It was of a circular form, thirty or forty paces in diameter, having the ground beaten down and levelled. Compare Judges 6: 37—40. ‖ *Garner;* granary, storehouse. ‖ *Unquenchable fire;* fire that will not be put out, but which will make an utter destruction. In reference to the future punishment of the wicked, which is manifestly here spoken of, this expression cuts off the hope of their ever being relieved from it. As parallel with vs. 10—12, compare Mark 1: 7, 8, and Luke 3: 9, 16, 17. Mark expresses the thoughts in a briefer form; Luke, with the same fulness as we find in Matthew. We cannot fail to NOTICE here, that certain and awful destruction awaits the impenitent; while to those who obey Christ and trust in him there will be safety and glory.

13. John, having borne such testimony to the superior dignity of the Messiah, as the Lord of the new dispensation, and as authorized to administer the honors and the punishments pertaining to this long-expected reign of heaven, was now called to an act at which we cannot be surprised that he should experience unwonted emotion. *From Galilee to Jordan.* Mark says (1: 9), "from Nazareth of Galilee;" the place of the Saviour's abode after the return from Egypt. Matt. 2: 23. The precise spot on the banks of the Jordan, where John was now occupied, is not stated.

14. *Forbade him;* sought to dissuade him. John declined performing this service, from a deep consciousness of his inferiority and unworthiness. John was a truly humble man. See John 3: 28, 30.

15. *To fulfil all righteousness;* fully to perform all our duties, so that no part of righteous obedience may be left unperformed; as much as to say, It becomes us to attend to every duty. It is my duty to be baptized; it is your duty, appointed to you from heaven, to administer baptism. The question of superiority, or inferiority, must not interfere with appointed duty. JESUS is an example of ready obedience to the divine will. Let us imitate his spirit.

16. *Out of the water.* The preposition here translated *out of* has the more general signification of the word *from*, and would be suitable, whether the sacred writer meant to say that Jesus came *out from* the water, that is, from within the river to the shore; or, that he came *from* the water, that is, retired from the bank of the river to another place. This preposition, then, in itself, furnishes no decision in respect to the manner of the ordinance. But that the rendering *out of* is correct, appears from the facts, that persons to be baptized went to a *river;* that the proper meaning of the word *baptize* is to *immerse;* and that in Acts 8: 39, the preposition translated *out of* is, in the original, the very one which would be selected to express the coming up *out of the water*, after a person had been baptized. In the case of Jesus, as in the instance recorded in Acts 8: 39, it was after he had been baptized that he came up out of, or from, the water. ‖ *The heavens were opened.* Luke (3: 21) mentions the additional circumstance, that Jesus was praying. What was the appearance when the heavens opened, cannot with certainty be said. Probably, however, it was such an appearance as the apparent part-

heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And, lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my

ing of clouds by a flash of lightning. ‖ *Like a dove.* Luke says (3 : 22), "in a bodily shape like a dove;" a fit emblem of the pure and peaceful Spirit, whose influences rested so abundantly on Jesus, and which were to be so conspicuously manifested in the Messiah's dispensation. See Is. 61 : 1—3. From John 1 : 33, it appears that a visible descent of the Holy Spirit was the appointed token for making the Messiah fully known to John.

This dove-like manifestation of the Holy Spirit may well suggest to us the INQUIRY, whether we possess the pure and peaceful temper of mind, which the gospel enjoins and the Holy Spirit produces.

17. *My beloved Son. The Son of God* was one of the titles belonging to the Messiah, in virtue of his office. See John 1 : 49. 11 : 27. Rom. 1 : 4. It expresses the intimate relation he sustains to God, and the consummate dignity of his office. This declaration, then, was an authoritative announcement from heaven, that Jesus, who had just been baptized, and who had been marked out to the by-standers (Luke 3 : 21, 22) in so signal manner, by the lighting upon him of a dove-like object, was the long-expected Messiah. Let us INQUIRE of ourselves, Do we receive and obey him as the Son of God, our Redeemer and Lord?

A question has sometimes been raised, as to the design of Jesus, in receiving baptism from John. As Jesus was always perfectly holy, and as the baptism administered by John is called "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mark 1 : 4), that is, baptism, which contains in it a declaration of serious purpose to forsake sin, to be holy in heart and life, and that with respect to obtaining the forgiveness of past sins, it is manifest that baptism administered to Jesus, could not have had the same significancy, in *all* points, as it had when administered to others.

Some have said, he received baptism as a ceremony, introducing him into the priestly office, since he was to be the high priest of his people. But of such an intention, the Scriptures no where give any intimation; nor is there any prescription in the Mosaic ritual, that high priests, at entering upon their office, should be baptized. Even if such a ceremony had been introduced among the superstitions of the times subsequent to Moses, such an unauthorized observance would form no part of our Lord's *righteousness* or *duty*. Besides, "it is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah; of which tribe Moses spake nothing concerning priesthood." Heb. 7 : 14. To him, then, even the prescribed observances respecting priests, would not necessarily be applicable.

Others have represented the Saviour's baptism as being a public inauguration into his office as Messiah. Viewed as the first public act of his life in reference to the new dispensation, and viewed in connection with the voice from heaven, which announced him to the multitude as the Son of God, it did indeed answer the purpose of an introduction of him to his official work. And this thought may have been included in the language of John the Baptist, as recorded by John (1 : 31): "That he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." This public manifestation was, however, rather an incidental matter, than the leading purpose to be accomplished by his being baptized. We would say, that his baptism was an event furnishing a favorable opportunity for a public announcement, rather than that the announcement was the grand object of his being baptized. In the passage of John just quoted,

beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

the phrase "*baptizing with water*," signifies the *whole office* of John the Baptist; as often a part is put for the whole. Thus regarded, this passage entirely harmonizes with all those representations which exhibit John's whole business, as a herald and baptizer, to be, making preparation for the Messiah.

On what principle, then, did Jesus receive baptism from the hands of John? The reply of Jesus to John answers this inquiry—"Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness;" that is, it becomes us to fill up the whole circle of our duties. To be baptized was a part of duty, of holy obedience, which was at that time incumbent on every pious man, on every friend of God; and the neglect of baptism would have been a neglect of divinely-appointed duty. John had come with a commission from heaven (John 1: 33, Mark 11: 30), to announce the approach of the Messiah, to call the people to hearty reformation, and to separate, by the rite of baptism, those who should profess a serious purpose to forsake sin and to practise holiness. Baptism was the rite which was then to distinguish those who in holy obedience were professing to hold themselves ready for the coming Messiah; and the true friends of God were to be found among the baptized. What, then, in these circumstances, was the duty of a man whose whole soul was now, and ever had been, devoted to God in true holiness? In what company ought Jesus to place himself? He was known already as a singularly pious man; and John was separating, by the rite of baptism, those who professed a serious determination to lead a life of piety (Luke 3: 10—14); and baptism had been divinely appointed for those who professed to cherish a pious regard for the promises and the commands of God. In this view, though he had no sins to repent of and to abandon, and needed no forgiveness, yet he would not have been in his proper place, if he had stood aloof from the baptized; and baptism received from John, the authorized administrator, was a part of his personal duty, just as prayer and other holy exercises were a part of his duty. As confirming this representation, it should be observed, that the original word translated *repentance*, in the expression "baptism of repentance," conveys the idea of *a life of piety* much more prominently than the idea of *sorrow* and *regret*. True reformation of heart and life, true piety, is rather signified by the original word than *sorrow*.

In the new dispensation, also, baptism was to be an ordinance of perpetual obligation. As a part, then, of the example which he was to furnish for his followers, Jesus received the baptism which had respect to the new dispensation.

But, though Jesus received baptism as a righteous person, and as furnishing an example for his followers, yet it was proper that his baptism should not take place until the suitable time for his being publicly announced as the Messiah should have come, inasmuch as at his baptism a special token was to be given in attestation of his being the Messiah. Besides, Jesus lived at Nazareth, some distance from the principal scene of John's labors; and Jesus may have repaired to John very soon after the proclamation of John had excited attention in the neighborhood of Nazareth.

One thought more in regard to baptism. The evangelists represent baptism as administered by John, as the baptism of repentance; that is, baptism, connected with, and implying, repentance. From Acts 19: 4, we learn, that, besides enforcing repentance, John directed the minds of his hearers to the Messiah, who was about to appear. Thus, in the baptism of John, there was not only, on the part of those who were baptized, a profession of repentance, but also a

CHAPTER IV.

THEN was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

profession of holding themselves ready to receive and obey the Messiah, when he should appear. The baptism of John, then, though it was but the commencement of the new dispensation, the twilight of the new day, yet contained substantially the elements of the ordinance as still further developed and carried out by the Messiah himself. After the Messiah had performed all that it was necessary for him to accomplish on earth, then baptism, still retaining its connection with repentance, was specially a manifestation of true faith in him that *had* come, and died, and had risen again. Rom. 6: 3, 4. Now, the Lord of this new dispensation knew at first the design of baptism in its full extent. It had not, when he was baptized, been fully developed; but as baptism was intended to contain a reference to his own death, and burial, and resurrection, how suitable that, at the very beginning of his dispensation, he should himself receive the instructive and affecting ordinance; and that, after he had died, and had been raised up from the dead, it should be known that he had received the administration of an ordinance, which, in its full meaning, was to be significant of his death and resurrection, and of the obligation of his followers to become "dead to sin," and to arise to "newness of life"!

CHAPTER IV.

1. Jesus, having now been publicly proclaimed by a voice from heaven as the Messiah, may be regarded as entering upon his official work. But before actually engaging in the execution of it, he seems to have sought opportunity for long-continued fasting and devotion, as appropriate to the circumstances in which he then was. For this purpose, he repaired to some of the solitudes in the wilderness of Judea. Such was, probably, a leading design of our Lord in retiring to the wilderness. The Holy Spirit, under whose influence he sought this opportunity for religious abstinence and contemplation, had the additional design of permitting him to be tempted by Satan, that he might signally foil the great adversary at the outset, by a triumphant resistance of his suggestions. For Jesus was to be "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Heb. 4: 15. *Led up;* influenced, incited to go. ‖ *Of the Spirit;* by the Holy Spirit. Luke 4: 1. ‖ *To be tempted of the devil.* We need not suppose that Jesus retired to the wilderness for the sake of trying his spiritual strength, by courting temptation, or rushing into it uncalled. His object was materially different; namely, a special preparation for commencing his official work, by uninterrupted communion with his Heavenly Father. But while engaged in his own proper object, Satan took advantage of his situation, to tempt him. It was, however, as has just been intimated, a part of the Holy Spirit's design, that Jesus should be subjected to the special temptations of the evil one, that he might decidedly triumph over the great adversary. Jesus, too, was probably expecting an assault of this nature.

2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered.

2. *Fasted forty days and forty nights.* This language does not necessarily imply, that Jesus underwent a total abstinence from food during the space of time mentioned. The expressions are similar to the ordinary method of speaking among the Jews. Jesus was far away from the habitations of men during that space of time, and abstained from ordinary food; he ate no bread, nor any of the articles that were commonly used in families. He might have subsisted upon such articles as he could find in the wilderness — wild fruits, berries, roots,

3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.

herbs, honey-dew; thus scantily sustaining his animal nature, and giving his soul undisturbed opportunity for contemplation and communion with God, adapted to the extraordinary work which he had undertaken. A comparison of other passages of the Scriptures favors this view. In Esther 4: 16, the Jews were directed to fast, and neither eat nor drink, three days, night nor day, on account of their imminent danger. In Matt. 11: 18, John is said to have come neither eating nor drinking; yet we are informed in Matt. 3: 4, that he lived in a coarse and unusual manner, denying himself the ordinary comforts of life. By comparing Matt. 11: 18, with Luke 7: 33, we discover, that John's not eating nor drinking, means, not eating nor drinking the ordinary articles of food, living in a very self-denying way. Just so the fast in Esther's time was probably an abstaining from the ordinary way of living, so as to have as little time as possible occupied in preparing and eating food, and living in a manner corresponding to the deeply-distressing circumstances of the Jews; so that, in comparison with the usual method of living, they might well be said to be fasting for three days. We may regard our Saviour as feeling all the natural consequences of so long an abstinence from ordinary food, and thus being in a situation that would render the temptation to create food a very powerful one. Luke does indeed say (4: 2), that "in those days he did eat nothing." But by comparing this expression with another, recorded by the same writer, in Acts 27: 33, "This is the fourteenth day that ye have tarried, and continued fasting, *having taken nothing*," we perceive he may have meant, that the Saviour ate nothing in the usual regular manner. He lived most scantily. He ate what came to hand; and with no regular meals, and with none of common food, he passed the forty days

This mode of speaking may be illustrated by the manner in which we might speak of a person in a wasting sickness, or in deep affliction, without a relish for the common enjoyments or business of men, or for ordinary food. In conversation, we might say of such a person, He has eaten nothing for many a day.

But while the language does not render it positively certain that our Lord underwent an entire abstinence from food, it cannot, on the other hand, be shown that he did not wholly abstain from food of all kinds. Clearly, he might have been miraculously sustained; and at the end of the forty days, his natural appetite for food might have returned with distressing keenness, so that the temptation to obtain food by a miracle would be peculiarly powerful. ‖ *An hungered;* the same as our modern word *hungry.*

3. *And when the tempter came to him.* Satan came to Jesus, probably in the same way that he comes to us; that is, by suggesting wrong thoughts and proposals to our minds. The language of Mark (1: 13), and particularly that of Luke (4: 2), intimate that Satan was tempting Jesus during the forty days. Of all the particular temptations presented, perhaps only the most signal and trying ones are recorded; namely, those which were presented at the close of the forty days. ‖ *He said.* Matthew's representing Satan as holding a conversation with Jesus, is fully explained by the artless manner in which many honest and pious persons speak of their being tempted, or of Satan's tempting them, to commit sin. The evangelist's manner of speaking respecting Satan, corresponds also with the manner of other sacred writers. See Rom. 16: 20. 1 Pet. 5: 8. Rev. 2: 10. That is, they speak of him as we speak of one another. God, also, is spoken of in the same way, as having eyes, hands, feet, &c., and as speaking to men. ‖ *The Son of God;* the Messiah. Compare 3: 17. In the

4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and set-

original, the article is not used; and there might be a question, whether we should translate the expression thus — *the Son of God*, meaning the Messiah; or thus — *a son of God*, meaning a pious man. There is, however, no serious difficulty; for if Satan tempted Jesus on the ground merely of his claiming to be a pious man, the temptation to work a miracle would not have been appropriate; whereas it was appropriate, on the ground of his claiming to be the Messiah. ‖ *That these stones be made bread.* How artful the suggestion presented to Jesus, while in his distressing circumstances, in a state, so to speak, of starving, that he should employ his miraculous power in creating a supply for his wants!

4. *He answered and said.* As Satan's suggestion is represented in the light of a remark made to the Saviour, to the thought which at once arose in the Saviour's mind in opposition to it, is called an *answer;* as if there had been a conversation between them. ‖ *It is written;* in Deut. 8:3. The thought expressed in the passage referred to, is, that bread is not the only substance which can sustain human life; that bread is not absolutely necessary, but that whatever God may please to appoint for that end, will sustain the life of man. ‖ *Word.* The original term thus rendered, has as extensive a signification as our term *thing;* and the expression *Every word* [thing] *that proceedeth out of the mouth of God*, is equivalent to, *Whatever God shall appoint.* Man's life can be sustained not only by bread, but by any thing which God may appoint. This was the thought which Jesus contemplated, and perhaps uttered, as refreshing to his soul, and making powerless the evil suggestions of the adversary. The exercise of the Messiah's supernatural power on such an occasion, might imply a distrust of divine providence, and would not have been in accordance with the design of miracles. That design was, to furnish public evidence of his being commissioned from God; not to satisfy the cravings of his own hunger. Besides, to perform a miracle at the suggestion of Satan, and with the view of removing his pretended doubts, would have been wholly unsuitable.

5. *The holy city;* Jerusalem, so called, as being the place where the temple was situated, and the public worship of God was performed. Compare Is. 48:2. Dan. 9:24. ‖ *Pinnacle of the temple.* The temple, in the time of Christ, had several porches. There was one distinguished by its size and height. It was one hundred cubits high, or, reckoning from the valley below, down which a person could not look without dizziness, four or five hundred cubits, that is, six or seven hundred feet. It was this, in all probability, which is here meant. But how did the devil *take* him to this place? Probably as one person takes, or carries, another to some place. A man takes another to a place, when he accompanies him, particularly with a design to accomplish something respecting him in that place. Jesus, having spent as much time as he desired in the wilderness, again sought the habitations of men. He was now probably proposing, in his own mind, to visit the temple in Jerusalem. From the loftiest elevation of the temple, he could take a survey of the city and of the surrounding country, to whose inhabitants he was soon to appear in a most important relation. In prosecuting this design, the tempter accompanied him; and he might in a guileful manner communicate such thoughts as would strengthen the Saviour's purpose to ascend the highest spot of the building. And when the Saviour arrived

teth him on a pinnacle of the temple,

6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all

at that spot, a favorable opportunity presented for insinuating another temptation.

6. *Cast thyself down.* There might have been some reference in this temptation to what we find expressed by some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, in John 7:27—"No man knoweth whence he [the Messiah] is." Should Jesus have cast himself down from that elevation, and the knowledge of so wonderful a descent be spread abroad, it might have given him immediate favor with the people. Such might have been the form of the temptation. Or it might have been simply a strong temptation presumptuously to put divine providence to the test, such as might well be supposed to arise in the mind of a man who was standing on a very giddy height. ‖ *For it is written;* Ps. 91: 11, 12, a passage expressing the care of divine providence over the righteous.

7. *It is written again;* Deut. 6: 16. ‖ *Tempt.* This word here signifies *to put to the proof*, or *to test.* Thus, Thou shalt not put the Lord thy God to the proof; thou shalt not test the truth of his promises, by needlessly placing thyself in dangerous circumstances. The force of this passage, in rebutting Satan's suggestion, consisted in its being a caution against a presumptuous confidence in God, and a needless testing of the veracity of God. We are not to understand the Saviour as here calling himself "the Lord thy God," and cautioning Satan not to persist in tempting him. The view presented above is the only one consistent with the connection. The word *tempt* is used in the same sense in Gen. 22: 1—"God did tempt Abraham;" that is, put him to trial, tested the reality and strength of his faith.

8. The devil availed himself of another favorable opportunity to seduce the Messiah to take a wrong course. *Taketh him;* that is, as in the former instance, induced him to go, and went with him. There is no need, from the nature of this language of regarding Jesus as putting himself into Satan's power, or as at all encouraging Satan in his foul designs, or as allowing himself to be in any degree overcome by him. The design of Jesus in ascending the lofty mountain was doubtless a very different one from that which Satan wished to accomplish in accompanying him, or in any way inducing him to go. ‖ *An exceeding high mountain.* In the vicinity of Jerusalem there were lofty elevations. East from Jerusalem, on the other side of the Jordan, there was also Mount Nebo, from one of whose summits, namely, Pisgah, Moses had a view of the promised land. Deut. 34: 1—4. What mountain was intended by the evangelist, cannot be determined. ‖ *All the kingdoms of the world.* Luke (4: 5), adds, "in a moment of time;" that is, so to speak, at a single glance. *The world* is sometimes used to denote *an extensive region.* Compare Rom. 1: 8. The word used in the original of Luke 4: 5, is somewhat different from the word used by Matthew, but, like that, is applicable to a smaller or to a larger extent of country, and is actually used when only Palestine is meant. See Acts 11: 28. History shows that Palestine was the country where the famine there spoken of prevailed. In the verse before us, we may understand the

the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;

9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.

10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

11 Then the devil leaveth him, and behold, angels came and ministered unto him.

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word in this limited sense, as expressing the principalities in and around Palestine. This whole region was divided into several *governments*—a term which answers well to the original one rendered *kingdoms*. But as Palestine, with the country around, was an appendage to the vast Roman empire, a mind which was contemplating worldly authority and the splendor connected with it, might naturally pass from viewing Palestine to a mental apprehension of the whole empire, and even of the government of the whole world. While, then, Jesus, on the summit of the mountain, was surveying the land, with the design of deeply affecting his heart in prospect of what he was to do and to suffer in that region, Satan may have suggested the ideas, How glorious it would be to become the monarch of these regions! and, as the people were expecting the Messiah, and expecting in him a great temporal deliverer and prince, How easily might all this power and splendor be acquired! If Jesus would but renounce the authority of God, and, ceasing to contemplate his real work, would place himself on the side of Satan, and pay homage to him, all this power and glory might become his own!

9. *Will I give thee.* Satan was called the god, or prince, of this world. John 12: 31. 14: 30. 2 Cor. 4: 4. In accordance with this idea was the impious suggestion of the adversary. ‖ *Fa'l down and worship me.* Respect and homage were frequently expressed by prostration, together with corresponding language. Hence the phrase "fall down and worship," signifies what we express by the phrase *do homage.* In the present case, Jesus might be said to be paying homage to Satan, had he been willing to renounce God and to seek for great worldly power.

10. The thought of grasping at temporal power was instantly repelled. *It is written;* Deut. 6: 13. Jehovah only is the Lord of power and might, the dispenser of kingdoms and of glory. To him only is such homage due as Satan sought for himself. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." Ps. 24: 1.

11. *The devil leaveth him.* Luke (4: 13) adds the words "for a season." Satan renewed his attacks near the termination of the Messiah's work on earth. John 14: 30. ‖ *Angels came and ministered unto him.* Compare Mark 1: 13. Heavenly beings came, to rejoice with him at the triumphant issue of his trials, to administer in various ways to his wants, and particularly to impart consolation to his mind. So, on another occasion, an angel from heaven strengthened him. Luke 22: 43. Compare Heb. 1: 14. For Luke's account of our Saviour's temptation, see Luke 4: 1—13.

HINTS FOR REFLECTION, suggested by the account of our Lord's temptation.

1. Jesus, in view of his great work, sought opportunity for special communion with God. See the note on v. 1. How suitable an example for us, when undertaking any important work!

2. In immediate connection with special religious exercises, was dreadful temptation. When, then, we are in the most devout and religious state, let us specially guard against temptation.

3. Temptations are often presented in a very specious guise. Even

12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee:
13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:

the word of God may be abused to the purpose of encouraging a person in sin. v. 6.

4. The word of God, properly understood and applied, is a happy preservative from temptation. vs. 4, 7, 10.

5. Worldly advancement ought to be of no weight, when contrasted with duty to God and with our spiritual interests.

6. Holy angels are not indifferent spectators of our sorrows and trials. v. 11. Heb. 1: 14.

7. We have a Saviour, who has been sorely *tempted*, and who is able to succor us when tempted. Heb. 2: 17, 18. 4: 15.

12. Matthew here passes over a considerable space of time, which intervened between the temptation and our Saviour's taking up his abode in Capernaum. To obtain a correct view of our Saviour's history, the evangelists must be compared together. One of them omits some things, which another relates. One gives a more full account than another. Hence the accounts of all are necessary in order to obtain a connected view of events. According to the statements of John, it would seem, that Jesus became considerably known in Judea, by means of John the Baptist and certain persons whom he had invited to an acquaintance with himself (John 1: 35, &c.); that he went to Galilee, and attended the wedding at Cana (2: 1—11); that thence he went to Capernaum and spent a few days (2: 12); that he again went to Jerusalem to attend a passover (2: 13—25), and remained some time in Judea, increasing the number of his followers, before John the Baptist was cast into prison (3: 22—36). After John was imprisoned, Jesus retired from Judea to Galilee. Of this last-mentioned going to Galilee Matthew now speaks. *John was cast into prison.* For an account of John's imprisonment, see Matt. 14: 3—5. Mark 6: 17—20. Luke 3: 19, 20. || *Into Galilee;* the northern part of the country. See the Map. Jesus retired to Galilee, probably because he had accomplished in Judea as much as circumstances rendered suitable at present; and, the jealousy of the Pharisees and other distinguished men having been excited (John 4: 1), a longer continuance there might only have cherished their ill-will, and exposed himself prematurely to their machinations. Galilee was a part of the land where their influence was less felt, and where he could more profitably devote himself to the object of his mission. It was necessary, too, that all parts of the land should share in his labors.

On this journey to Galilee, probably, he passed through Samaria, as is related by John, 4th chapter. When arrived in Galilee, he healed in Cana the nobleman's son (John 4: 46—54), and exercised his ministry in the synagogues of Galilee.

13. *And leaving Nazareth.* Luke (4: 16—31) informs us of the Saviour's going to Nazareth, and of the circumstances in which he departed from it. || *Dwelt in Capernaum;* made Capernaum the principal place of his residence. See Luke 4: 31. Capernaum, as the Map shows, was situated on the north-western shore of the sea of Galilee. || *Zabulon and Nephthalim;* names of two tribes of the Israelites, so called from the two sons of Jacob, Zebulun and Naphtali. Gen. 49: 13, 21. There is a slight difference in the sounds of these names, as expressed in the Hebrew and in the Greek languages. In the division of the land among the tribes under Joshua, these two obtained their lots in the neighborhood of the sea of Galilee. Josh. 19: 10, 11, 32.

14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

15 The land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim, *by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light: and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light is sprung up.

17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

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14. *That it might be fulfilled*, &c. Jesus' going to Galilee, and making Capernaum, a noted town in Galilee, the principal place of his residence, was in accordance with the prophetic language of Isaiah. The prophet (Is. 9: 1, 2) had foretold, that the region occupied by the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali should be reduced to *a degraded state*. This is the idea expressed by the term rendered *lightly afflicted*, in Isaiah. The prediction was fulfilled by the Assyrian kings, who conquered and depopulated that part of the country and the other parts occupied by the ten tribes. Thus that region was humbled, or made despicable. The prophet then proceeds to state, that in after times God *would honor* that region, or render it greatly distinguished. This, according to the ablest critical writers, is the thought expressed by the Hebrew word in Isaiah, which our translators have rendered *did more grievously afflict*. Now this latter part of the prediction had reference to the changes which would be effected in consequence of the Messiah's coming. By his appearing and establishing his righteous cause, that land would be greatly honored. Our Lord's going into that region, and making it the principal scene of his labors, naturally recalled to mind this prophecy, as then receiving a part of its fulfilment.

15. *By the way of the sea;* the region along the sea of Galilee. ‖ *Beyond Jordan;* another geographical term, meaning the country on the other side, that is, on the eastern side, of the Jordan. ‖ *Galilee of the Gentiles*. In Is. 9: 1, we read, *Galilee of the nations*. The Jews distinguished other people from themselves by calling them *the nations*, or *Gentiles*. Galilee, or at least a part of it, received the epithet here employed, because it bordered on territories inhabited by people who were not Jews. The designation was still more appropriate in later times; for the more northern parts of Galilee became settled by a very mixed population. In the time of our Saviour, Galilee was divided into two parts; namely, upper, or northern, and lower, or southern.

16. *Sat in darkness;* were destitute of religious knowledge and true happiness. ‖ *Saw great light;* received advantages for acquiring religious knowledge and bliss. The Saviour was "the light of the world." Any region to which he should come, as the teacher and redeemer of men, might indeed be considered as highly favored, for it would enjoy light from heaven. ‖ *Region and shadow of death*. These words express, though in a stronger manner, the same ideas as are expressed by the word *darkness*, in the former part of the verse. *Shadow of death* is equivalent to *deathshade*, or *deathlike shade;* darkness like that of death, utter destitution of moral and religious good.

Notice, 1. How great is the privilege of living where the light of the gospel shines! Compare our privileges with the moral condition of heathen nations.

2. How cheering is the thought that the gospel, the lamp of life, is to shine over all the regions of moral night on earth!

17. *Repent;—the kingdom of heaven.* See on 3: 2.

18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

20 And they straightway left *their* nets, and followed him.

21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James *the son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.

22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.

23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people.

24 And his fame went throughout all Syria; and they

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18. *Sea of Galilee;* called also the sea of Tiberias (John 6: 1. 21: 1); the lake of Gennesaret (Luke 5: 1); and, in the Old Testament, the sea of Chinnereth (Num. 34: 11). This lake, or inland sea, is between twelve and sixteen miles long, and five broad. Its waters are pure and sweet, and it abounds in fish. It is situated in a very pleasant region, from the hills of which many rivulets descend.

19. *Fishers of men;* a sufficiently clear intimation, that he designed to employ them in promoting his cause.

22. *The ship;* a small fishing vessel. ‖ *Followed him.* At this time, probably, the disciples mentioned in the 18th and 21st verses, abandoned their occupation, as a stated pursuit, and became constant attendants on Jesus. At an earlier period (see John 1: 40, &c.), Andrew, Simon Peter, and Philip, seem to have been, in a peculiar manner, attached to Jesus. But, probably, the invitation, or command, given at that more early period, was designed only to secure their attendance for a short time; and they returned to their employment for a subsistence. At the time of which Matthew here speaks, the persons named were more specially called by the Saviour to be his constant attendants.

The account here given by Matthew corresponds to the account given by Mark (1: 16—20), and by Luke (5: 1—11). Luke gives a more particular statement than the other writers. By comparing the several accounts, it would seem that Jesus went on board of Simon's boat, and from that taught the people. He then directed that the boat should be put off into the sea for fishing. After taking a remarkable draught of fishes, Simon and Andrew were called from their employment, to follow Jesus. Shortly after this, as Jesus was walking along the shore, he saw James and John in their father's boat, and in a similar manner called them.

23. *Synagogues;* Jewish houses of worship. The temple was in Jerusalem; but, for the convenience of the people, smaller houses were erected for worship in various places. ‖ *Gospel of the kingdom.* The word translated *gospel* properly means *glad tidings, joyful announcement. Preaching the gospel* here means *announcing the glad tidings. The kingdom* here means *the reign of God*, or *of heaven* — a term signifying the Messiah's administration. See on 3: 2. The whole phrase, *preaching the gospel of the kingdom*, means, *announcing the joyful news of the reign of God*, that is, of the Messiah's having come. See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, I., On the meaning of the word *Gospel*, page xiii. of this volume.

24. *Syria;* the country north and

brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatic, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.

25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and *from* Decapolis, and *from* Jerusalem, and *from* Judea, and *from* beyond Jordan.

CHAPTER V.

AND seeing the multitudes, he went up into a moun-

north-east of Palestine. ‖ *Possessed with devils.* The word *demons*, that is, evil spirits, would be more suitable than the word *devils*. The New Testament, in the original, makes a distinction between the Devil, who is the chief of the fallen spirits (Matt. 12: 24. 25: 41), and demons, or evil spirits, who are subject to him. It is the demons who are represented as entering into persons and *possessing* them. ‖ *Lunatic;* persons afflicted with epilepsy, or with derangement, whose disorder was supposed to increase in strength with the increase of the moon. ‖ *Palsy.* Under the general name of *palsy*, many infirmities were comprehended. 1. The apoplexy, a paralytic shock which affected the whole body. 2. The hemiplegy, which paralyzed only one side of the body. 3. The paraplegy, which paralyzed all the parts below the neck. 4. The catalepsy, a contraction of the muscles in the whole, or in a part, of the body. If a person's hand, for instance, when struck with it, was extended, he was unable to draw it back; if not extended, when struck with it, he was unable to extend it. It became diminished and dried up. 5. The cramp. The limbs, when seized with the cramp, remained immovable, sometimes turned in, and sometimes out, in the same position as when they were first seized.

25. The names of places mentioned in this verse have already been noticed, and the places may be seen on the Map, with the exception of *Decapolis*. This word is commonly explained as signifying *a district containing ten cities* (the word *deka* in the Greek language meaning *ten*, and *polis*, a city). In the enumeration of these cities, writers are not agreed; and the accounts given of the name are not satisfactory. The cities commonly named did not lie in the same region of country, but were considerably distant from each other. Josephus, the Jewish historian, mentions Scythopolis as one of them, a city which was on the west side of the Jordan; the other cities were on the east. Decapolis may be regarded as a region beyond, that is, east of, the Jordan, embracing several cities; and these cities were inhabited principally by people who were not Jews.

OBSERVE, 1. A worthy example of prompt obedience to Jesus. vs. 20, 22.

2. The devotion of Jesus to his official work. v. 23. Compare also John 4: 34.

3. The benevolence of Jesus. v. 24. Compare Acts 10: 38.

It is also a painful reflection, and one which ought to excite *us* to self-examination, that, while multitudes were attracted to Jesus (v. 25), very few, comparatively, became "disciples indeed." John 8: 31.

CHAPTER V.

In this chapter and the two following ones, Matthew has recorded what is called the *sermon on the mount*. Luke has also presented (6: 20—49) the same discourse substantially, though in a smaller compass. The company to which it was delivered, and the event related as occurring just after, lead to the conclusion, that both Matthew and Luke record the same discourse. Compare Matt. 4: 24, 25, and 5: 1, with Luke 6: 17; and Matt. 8: 5—13, with Luke 7: 1—10. There is an apparent disagreement between the two evange-

tain; and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:

2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

3 Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

lists; namely, Matthew speaks of Jesus going up the mountain so as to address the people; but Luke says, that Jesus, having spent a night in prayer on a mountain (6: 12), came down and stood in the plain (6: 17), and, without mentioning any change of place, proceeds to speak of his addressing the company. This disagreement, however, is only apparent, and can be easily reconciled. Luke says, that Jesus retired to a mountain, and spent the night in prayer; that he came down in the morning, and exercised his healing power on the many sick that were among the multitude (6: 17—19); and Matthew mentions the *additional* circumstance, that Jesus again repaired to a suitable spot on the mountain. Luke says nothing in opposition to this; he only omits to mention it.

By further comparing Matthew with Luke, it would appear, that, a short time before addressing the multitude, Jesus formally selected his apostles. Some he appears to have selected previously (Matt. 4: 18—22); he now completed the number of twelve. Matthew gives no intimation of the time when the whole number of the twelve was filled up. He barely mentions the names of the apostles on another occasion, when he was about to give an account of the instructions which they received previously to being sent forth as the Messiah's heralds. Matt. 10: 2—4.

By bearing in mind the circumstance, that Jesus had before him his twelve apostles, selected for his special service, and a multitude of other persons, some of whom, doubtless, were gladly receiving instruction, and others were drawn by curiosity and by desire that their sick friends might be cured, we shall see how appropriate was his discourse in all its parts. The apostles, in view of their work, needed cautions and encouragement; many of the multitude needed warning on various points; and all needed better and more enlarged views of the nature of true religion, and of the design of the Messiah.

1. *The multitudes;* the people spoken of in 4: 25. ‖ *A mountain;* the mountain on which he had spent the preceding night in prayer. See Luke 6: 12. It was probably some elevation in the neighborhood of Capernaum; for he entered Capernaum soon after finishing the discourse. See Matt. 8: 5. Luke 7: 1. ‖ *When he was set;* having taken a seat. Such was the custom in teaching among the Jews. Compare Luke 4: 20.

3. *Blessed;* truly happy. The object of our Saviour in these introductory verses was, to correct the prevailing erroneous notions respecting true happiness, and to show in what it really consists. ‖ *The poor in spirit;* those whose temper of mind corresponds to a condition destitute of worldly advantages; those who are lowly, conscious of ignorance and unworthiness; that is, the humble in mind. Such are truly happy in contrast with the proud, the great, those who are aspiring after the honors of this world. ‖ *Kingdom of heaven;* the Messiah's reign, commenced on earth, and consummated in the world of glory. To the lowly in mind, not to the proud and aspiring, belong the blessings of the Messiah's administration, both in this life and in the life to come. See on 3: 2.

4. *They that mourn.* The word here used in the original is applicable to persons in sorrowful circumstances, in affliction. The idea is, truly happy are persons in adversity, rather than the prosperous. ‖ *Comforted.* The tendency of afflictions is, to lead men to the proper source of abiding consolation. Many, when they are afflicted, do not obtain true consolation;

5 Blessed *are* the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

6 Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7 Blessed *are* the merciful for they shall obtain mercy.

8 Blessed *are* the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

still, a state of affliction is more favorable for obtaining everlasting bliss, than a state of prosperity. In the general idea of affliction, mourning for sin may be included; and the call to repentance had been so distinctly made on previous occasions, that the Saviour's hearers could be in no uncertainty respecting its necessity. His object, however, on the present occasion, seems to have been not so much to show the need of repentance, as to unfold some other great principles of his religion, and to show wherein man's true happiness consists. The Jews had associated great worldly honor and happiness with the coming of the Messiah; Jesus wished to draw away their minds from such expectations, to lead them to spiritual views, and to a suitable indifference as to the honors and prosperity of this world, and thus to correct their false notions of bliss and of the Messiah's reign.

5. *The meek;* the gentle, the kind, the forgiving. Truly happy will such be esteemed, when contrasted with the angry, the harsh, and the unrelenting. Compare Luke 9: 51—56. ‖ *They shall inherit the earth;* more properly, *the land.* This expression appears to have been a proverbial one among the Jews, indicative of *consummate bliss.* Compare Ps. 37: 9, 11, 22, 29. Its origin was this: God had promised to Abraham that his posterity should eventually possess the land in which he was sojourning. Gen. 13: 14—17. 15: 18. 17: 8. Acts 7: 5. This promise was repeated to Isaac (Gen. 26: 3, 4), and to Jacob (Gen. 28: 13, 14). Thus it came to be the object of desire and expectation to their descendants, and they regarded the possession of the promised land as combining every good thing, and as a pledge of the divine faithfulness and of prosperity. The expression was used, as we see in the 37th Psalm, *after* the people had become settled in the land, and in v. 11th, appears to be of the same import as the expression, *delighting themselves in the abundance of peace,* or *prosperity.* The idea, then, expressed by our Saviour is, Truly happy are the meek; for they shall enjoy special tokens of divine regard. It is well to NOTICE here, that one of the most interesting and affecting representations which the Saviour makes of himself is, "I am meek and lowly in heart." Matt. 11: 29.

6. *Hunger and thirst;* earnestly desire, as a man hungry and thirsty desires food and drink. ‖ *Righteousness;* holiness, uprightness in the most extensive sense, in heart and life, towards God and towards man. ‖ *Filled;* satisfied. As a hungry man derives satisfaction from food, so they shall obtain satisfaction by receiving the object of their desires.

7. *The merciful;* the compassionate; those who are inclined to pity, and are considerate of others' wants and welfare; not overbearing, nor heedless of others' interests: such a man as is described in Ps. 112: 4, 5, 9. Compare Luke 10: 30—37. ‖ *They shall obtain mercy.* Compare Ps. 41: 1—3. Both God and man will show them favor. A uniformly merciful disposition, manifested in the ordinary concerns of life as well as on signal occasions, in private as well as in public, to inferiors and to the neglected as well as to others, cannot but be acceptable to reflecting men and to God. A man well known to be merciful seldom meets with insult and neglect.

8. *The pure in heart;* the sincerely upright and pious, whose hearts correspond to their outward profession of love to God; of whose hearts Omniscience can approve, as men approve of their lives: such men as was Nathanael. John 1: 47. ‖ *They shall see God;* they shall enjoy the special fa-

9 Blessed *are* the peace-makers: for they shall be called the children of God.

10 Blessed *are* they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 Blessed are ye when *men* shall revile you, and persecute *you*, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.

12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great *is* your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.

13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

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vor of God. In the East, kings very rarely made their appearance in public; and in some countries, to go into the presence of a monarch without being expressly invited, would expose a person to death. See Esther 4: 11. Hence, to be admitted to the presence of the king, was a very propitious circumstance. The expression, therefore, *to see God*, is equivalent to the expression, *to enjoy his favor*.

9. *The peace-makers;* those who are ready to interpose their kind offices for maintaining mutual peace, and for restoring harmony when it has been interrupted. ‖ *Children of God.* They resemble God in their disposition, and will be acknowledged and treated by him as his children. The spirit of peace and good will, uniformly cherished amid provocations as well as in other circumstances, is no slight evidence of a person's being under the influence of pure religion. The spirit of discord and war, whether on a large scale or a small one, finds no countenance in the principles of Him, who is appropriately styled *Prince of peace.*

10. *The kingdom of heaven.* See on v. 3.

12. *The prophets*, &c.; such as Elijah (1 Kings 18: 17. 19: 1—18. 21: 20); Elisha (2 Kings 2: 23); Jeremiah (Jer. 20: 2, 10. 26: 8—15. 32: 3. 37: 11—15. 38: 4—13); Daniel (Dan. 6: 1—17).

Such declarations as are contained in these introductory verses, were well adapted to excite the attention of the people, as containing new sentiments; to correct false notions, so generally indulged, concerning human happiness and concerning the design of the Messiah's coming; to lead the people to spiritual views and to a just estimate of holiness and of heavenly good.

13. It would now seem that the Saviour directed his remarks more particularly to those whom he designed soon to send forth as his heralds and as teachers of his religion; while yet the thoughts expressed would also be applicable to all his followers. *The salt of the earth.* Salt has a purifying and preserving efficacy. So it would be incumbent on the apostles, by teaching, and on all the disciples, by example, to exert a salutary influence on the sentiments and characters of men. ‖ *Lost his savor;* become tasteless and powerless. The salt found in the Valley of Salt, near Aleppo in Syria, loses its saltness by exposure to the sun, rain, and air. The salt made in Judea from the water of the Dead Sea was probably liable to be thus spoiled. It may be proper to remark here, that the word *his* is used throughout the Bible, with reference to *things*, as well as to *persons*. ‖ *Wherewith shall it be salted?* how can it be endued with a saline quality, and become useful for the purposes of salt? as much as to say, it is valueless, and will be rejected. So the apostles and other disciples, unless religious truth and holy principles dwelt in them, would be valueless as to salutary religious influence, and would bring on themselves the disapprobation of God.

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.

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14. *The light of the world.* The darkness of moral and religious ignorance had covered the earth; but by means of the apostles of Jesus, the light of truth was to shine on the world. Jesus was emphatically "the light of the world." John 9: 5. 8: 12. In an inferior sense, his disciples also were the light of the world, for they were to communicate to men the truths of his religion. ‖ *A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.* So the disciples of Christ would attract notice.

15. *A candle;* more in accordance with Eastern customs, *a lamp.* ‖ *Bushel;* any large measure. ‖ *Candlestick;* lamp-stand.

16. *Glorify your Father;* ascribe praise to God. The holy and useful lives of the Saviour's followers reflect praise on the religion which they profess, and thus cause honor to be paid to God, from whom this religion proceeded.

17. The divine teacher next proceeded to correct some of the erroneous views of moral and religious duty which had been handed down from former times, and which were, in his day, maintained by the Scribes and Pharisees, the religious guides of the people. These views arose chiefly from a wrong interpretation of the Mosaic statutes, and from the authority of certain traditions. Jesus maintained the immutable nature of the fundamental principles enforced in the books of the Old Testament; corrected certain erroneous views of those principles; showed the very broad and extensive application of them; and gave such additional precepts, in regard to them, as the more elevated and complete nature of his religion rendered necessary. *To destroy;* to abrogate, to render null and void. ‖ *The law or the prophets;* the writings of the Old Testament, as divided into the law of Moses, or the Pentateuch, and the prophetical books, or the rest of the Old Testament. Compare Matt. 12: 5. Luke 2: 23. 16: 29, 31. 24: 27, 44. Though Jesus came as the predicted king, and acknowledged not the authority of the Scribes and Pharisees, at that time the religious teachers; though he stood by himself, and gave instructions and precepts on his own authority, — yet he did not annul the great principles contained in the law of Moses and in the writings of the prophets. ‖ *To fulfil;* to fill up, to complete, to carry out to perfection, and leave nothing to be added or to be altered. All religious teachers who had preceded the Messiah had left much incomplete, both as to the statement of principles, and the manifestation of the principles in actual practice. It was reserved for the Messiah to present the full light, of which before only some glimpses had been discerned. The dispensation by Moses and the prophets was preparatory to that of the Messiah, looking forward to it, and having reference to it, as the grand completion of the whole scheme of divine revelation. The Messiah came, then, not to annul, but to complete; not to abrogate any fundamental religious principles, but to carry out those principles to perfection. Whatever was abrogated by the Messiah's coming was merely of an external, circumstantial nature, and was abrogated on the ground of having answered all its purposes, and of having become needless, now that *He* had come, for whose coming they were preparatory.

18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach *them*, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

That our Saviour had reference here to the moral, and not to the ceremonial, part of the Old Testament, appears from the illustrations contained in the following verses (21—48).

18. *Verily;* truly, certainly. ‖ *Heaven and earth;* the visible universe. See Gen. 1: 1. 2: 1. ‖ *Pass;* pass away, perish. The expression *till heaven and earth pass away*, is similar to ours, *till the world shall end*, or, *as long as the world stands*. It was a received opinion among the Jews, that the earth would never be totally destroyed, but would at some time be renovated, and in this renewed form exist forever. To say, then, that a thing would not take place *till heaven and earth pass away*, was the same as saying, *it will never take place*. See Luke 16: 17. ‖ *Jot.* The Greek word here employed corresponds to the name of the smallest Hebrew letter, and means *the smallest thing*. ‖ *Tittle;* a very small point, by which certain Hebrew letters are distinguished from others; they being in other respects alike. The idea expressed by each of these words is, *the very smallest part*. ‖ *From the law;* from the religion enforced in the Old Testament. Compare the word *law* in the preceding verse. The declaration of the Saviour is, that not the smallest thing recognized in the fundamental moral principles of the Old Testament can be annulled. ‖ *Till all be fulfilled;* till the whole design of the law be effected, its promises be fulfilled, its threatenings performed, its precepts honored either by obedience or by punishment for disobedience. This phrase is regarded by some as a mere repetition, in another form, of the idea expressed by the words *till heaven and earth pass away*. Its meaning, then, if this be the right view, might be expressed by the phrase *till all things are done*, or *till every thing is done with*. The same words, however, in the original, occur in Luke 21: 32, and nearly the same in Matt. 24: 34, and Mark 13: 30, in such a manner as rather to favor the view first presented.

19. *Least commandments.* The Saviour did not, in his own judgment, apply the word *least* to any of the divine commands; but here adopted the method of speaking which was common among the Pharisees. They divided the commands into the small and the great, the weighty and the light. And in making these distinctions, they were inclined to enforce the tithing of mint, and anise, and cumin, and other external things, and to pass over justice, mercy, and the love of God. See Matt. 23: 16, 18, 23, 25. Luke 11: 42. Hence, to some of the divine commands they could attach, when it suited their convenience, the disrespectful epithet *least*, that is, *not worthy of much regard;* and they would lead others thus to view and to treat the precepts of God. But the Saviour declared, that he who should thus treat, in his own practice and by his teaching, the commands of God, would be regarded and treated in a similar manner in the new dispensation which was now introduced; that is, he should be held as not *worthy of regard*, but as *deserving rejection*. As he treated God's law, so, in the new dispensation, he would himself be treated; he would be counted as *least*, as unsuitable to enjoy the blessings and honors of the Messiah's administration. ‖ *In the kingdom of heaven;* the Messiah's reign, the new dispensation. The Saviour did not say, such a person may

20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed *the righteousness* of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

21 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:

22 But I say unto you, That

be admitted into heaven, and there considered as the least in the world of glory. He meant, as appears by the preceding remarks, such a person shall be accounted unsuitable to be among the Messiah's subjects; he shall be rejected from them. Of course, such a person cannot be admitted into the state of glory which is the completion of the Messiah's administration. ‖ *Great in the kingdom of heaven.* The word *great* is, here, the contrast of the word *least* in the former part of the verse. The idea is, *he shall be held of great account;* that is, suitable to be approved, acknowledged by the Messiah, and admitted to the blessings which he bestows here and hereafter. As such a person treats the divine commands, so he shall himself be treated. Accounting them all as great, as worthy of his reverence and obedience, he shall be accounted as a suitable subject for great honor and happiness in the new dispensation.

20. *Your righteousness;* integrity and piety. ‖ *The Scribes and Pharisees.* The scribes were men devoted to the study and the teaching of the law of Moses, and of the traditionary religious precepts. See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, III. 3. They and the Pharisees were held in such repute for possessing the favor of God, as to occasion the saying, that if only two men were to be admitted into heaven, one would be a scribe and the other a Pharisee. Their righteousness, however, was extremely defective. It was merely external, while their hearts were far from uprightness. See Matt. 15: 1—9. 23: 23, 25, 27, 28. Consisting in an outside show, it was intended to procure applause from men, rather than to please God. Matt. 23: 3, 5, 14. It was connected with harshness and oppression (Matt. 23: 4, 14), and with insatiable ambition (Matt. 23: 6, 7). Thus, in principle, in extent, and in actual fruits, their righteousness was, in truth, of no account, highly as they were esteemed among men. A better sort of piety is demanded in order to be a true subject of the Messiah, and to obtain the bliss pertaining to his administration. ‖ *The kingdom of heaven;* the Messiah's reign, or dispensation, commenced on earth, perfected in the world of glory. *To enter into this kingdom* is, to be admitted to a share in its bliss and rewards here and hereafter, as a subject of it.

21. The Saviour descended to particulars, and corrected some of the prevalent erroneous notions respecting the precepts of the Old Testament, and gave illustrations of his *fulfilling*, or *carrying out to complete fulness*, those precepts. He made needed explanations and additions. *By them of old time;* the ancients, teachers of a former age. The Saviour did not mean Moses and the prophets, but teachers who arose some time after them. These teachers had grossly misapprehended the spirit of many precepts in the Old Testament, and had attached to them modifying phrases, and had originated, or perpetuated, the traditional precepts and explanations. Such teaching had exerted its influence down to the time of Christ. ‖ *Thou shalt not kill.* Ex. 20: 13. ‖ *Whosoever shall kill,* &c. This was an addition, or explanation, made in subsequent times, and it proceeded on the principle, that the law recognized only actual murder. The precept and the explanation were placed together, as the rule of conduct. ‖ *In danger of;* liable to, exposed to. ‖ *The judgment* Josephus, the Jewish historian, states,

whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause, shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

that in every city there was a tribunal of seven judges, with two Levites as attending officers. This tribunal decided causes of comparatively small moment, and is the one here spoken of. *The judgment*, then, was an inferior tribunal of the Jews.

22. Widely different is the view which Jesus presented. So far from regarding only the outward act of murder as forbidden, and as exposing to punishment, he declared that a wrong state of mind, and offences considered at that time of little moment, but yet tending to the act of killing, would expose a person to punishment; that even causeless anger, disregarded as it was by those teachers, was a crime, in the judgment of God, of as great ill desert as that which they attached to the crime of murder. Compare 1 John 3: 15. *Brother*. Among the Hebrews, this word was sometimes used with much latitude, as equivalent to our expression *another person*. Compare Heb. 8: 11, Lev. 19: 17; also Gen. 13: 11, "the one from the other;" or, if literally translated, *from his brother;* 26: 31, "*one to another;*" in the Hebrew, *to his brother*. ‖ *In danger of the judgment;* exposed to the tribunal just mentioned. The idea is, that causeless anger exposes to punishment as truly as, according to the decision of these teachers, does the act of killing; and the guilt of causeless anger is as great as that which these teachers ascribe to the crime of killing. ‖ *Raca;* a term of contempt, equivalent to *blockhead*, or, *empty headed, fool*. It is properly a word derived from the Hebrew language, expressed in Greek letters, and transferred to the English language. ‖ *The council;* that is, the Sanhedrim. This was the highest tribunal among the Jews. It consisted of seventy-two persons, and the acting high priest was generally the president. It was composed of the most distinguished men in the nation. Appeals and other weighty matters came before this tribunal. In the time of Christ, its power had been limited by the Romans; but still it held the right of passing sentence of death, though the power of *executing* the sentence was lodged with the Roman governor.

The idea of the Saviour is, whoever shall indulge his anger so far as to use the opprobrious epithet Raca (*blockhead*) contracts guilt of such a dye as these teachers would ascribe to a crime which would be carried up to the Sanhedrim, the highest court; and he exposes himself to such an increase of punishment, as that it may be likened to the punishment decreed by *the Sanhedrim*, when compared with the punishment decreed by *the Judgment*.

Thus the Saviour marks a gradation of guilt and of punishment, while yet he has not described any crime beyond anger, nor arrived to the point of saying what murder deserves. How different from the teachers to whose decisions the Jews were accustomed!

‖ *Thou fool*. The word *fool* among the Hebrews was one of the vilest epithets they could employ. It did not so much imply a destitution of intellect, as a destitution of every good moral quality. See Ps. 14: 1. It was equivalent to the terms *impious wretch, denier of God and all religion*. It implied, then, in the person who used it, when speaking to another, a very high degree of anger, so high that he was willing to call upon him the reprobation of God and of man. ‖ *Hell fire*. The term in the original, translated *hell*, is derived from two Hebrew words, signifying *Valley of Hinnom*. This was a valley near the southern wall of Jerusalem. In a part of this valley was a place called *Topheth*, where, in the later periods of the Jewish kingdom, children were made to pass through the fire in sacrifice to Moloch. 2 Kings 16: 3. Jer. 7: 31. In the reign of Josiah (2 Kings

23 Therefore, if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee,

24 Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.

25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, while thou art

23: 10), a reformation was effected; and in subsequent times, the Jews conceived such an abhorrence of the place, that they made it the receptacle of all the filth and pollution of the city; and to prevent mischief from such an accumulation of carcasses and other putrid matter, they kept a fire burning. Hence the word *fire* was connected with it. So odious did this place become, and so associated with every thing bad and disagreeable, that they applied the name of it to the place of torments in a future life. It is also said, that criminals of more than ordinary guilt, who had excited universal detestation, were, after being executed, cast unburied into this abominable place. This was the extreme of punishment and disgrace. To this, as the very utmost extent of suffering on earth, the Saviour probably here alluded; and thus would correct the erroneous sentiments of the people, by showing that the indulgence of causeless anger is regarded by God as a very heinous crime, and as leading to most dire punishment, though such indulgence was passed over by the Jewish teachers, and only the *act* of *murder* was regarded by them as forbidden by the law.

The Saviour here specified three degrees of criminal anger, and three corresponding degrees of punishment. The crimes were take.. .ognizance of, not by the Jewish civil law, but by God's spiritual law; and the punishments would be inflicted by God. But in order to express these different degrees of punishment, reference was made to tribunals and practices among the Jews. The punishment expressed by the words *hell fire* would indeed be inflicted beyond the grave; so, too, would the punishment expressed by a reference to *the Council*, or the Sanhedrim, and to *the Judgment*. This is the only passage in the New Testament, in which the words *hell fire* relate directly to the Valley of Hinnom, as a representative merely of extreme misery in the world of woe. In other passages, they refer directly to the place of torment beyond the grave. The connection of the word in different passages sufficiently shows this.

23. Since now the cherishing of anger is so great a sin, and exposes to such danger, it ought not for a moment to be indulged; and no duties, however binding and sacred, ought to be held superior to the duty of obtaining reconciliation, if we have given any person occasion to be unpleasantly affected towards us. The teaching of the Pharisees gave no such prominence to an upright state of heart. *Gift to the altar.* Much of the religious observances of the Jews consisted in making offerings to God, and in sacrifices, which were brought to the altar. ‖ *Thy brother;* any person, as in 22d verse. ‖ *Hath aught against thee;* has just cause to find fault with thee. If thou art conscious of having done him wrong, and hast thus alienated his affections.

24. *Go thy way;* that is, to the person wronged. Wait not to make the offering; for it will be unacceptable to God, if presented in a spirit of unkindness towards any man. ‖ *Be reconciled;* prevail on him, by suitable acknowledgments, and whatever else is necessary, to be reconciled to thee; regain his favor. A very common meaning of the word *reconcile* in the Bible is, *to procure favor.*

25. This same spirit, leading to an amicable adjustment of all difficulties, ought to be cherished in the whole intercourse of life. A contrary spirit leads to ruin, even as to our temporal affairs. A maxim of prudence, then, was suggested by this view of the case. *Thine adversary;* thy creditor, who demands a settlement, and is

in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.

26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.

27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:

28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast *it* from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not *that* thy whole body should be cast into hell.

31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:

32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever

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about to take thee before a magistrate. Adjust the matter speedily. Let it not be carried to the judge, for the cause will go against thee; the judge will deliver thee over to the officer of punishment; thou wilt be thrown into prison.

26. *The uttermost farthing;* the last mite. Strict justice will then be executed; no mercy will be shown. The same sentiment is expressed in Luke 12: 58, 59.

27. *By them of old time.* See on v. 21. The Saviour proceeded to unfold the true spirit and meaning of another command (Ex. 20: 14), which was commonly explained as referring only to the outward act. Jesus declared that the guilt of adultery, so far from being confined to the outward crime, does also belong to him who cherishes impure desires in his heart.

29, 30. *Offend.* The modern signification of this word, *to displease, to affront*, is not applicable here. It means, *lead to sin, prove an occasion of sinning.* || *Hell.* The connection clearly shows that the world of future punishment is here meant. The Jews had no tribunal that could take cognizance of inward sins; nor were they disposed, in the time of Christ, to treat the crime of adultery with signal harshness. The thought expressed by the Saviour, is, it is better to suffer a partial loss in this life, however great a one, than a total loss in the coming world. The right eye and the right hand are members which we cannot well part with; but valuable as they are, it would be better to pluck out the one and to cut off the other, than by their means to be led into sin, and thus to incur the loss of the soul. These same expressions occur again in Matt. 18: 8, 9, as a *general* caution against occasions of sin.

31. *It hath been said;* that is, *by the ancients.* The statute of Moses in Deut. 24: 1, had been so explained by some of the Jewish teachers as to allow husbands to put away their wives in an arbitrary manner for very light causes, provided they gave a bill of divorce.

32. Jesus corrected this erroneous view, and declared what is the just, and the only just, ground of divorce. *Causeth her to commit adultery;* ex-

shall marry her that is divorced, committeth adultery.

33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:

34 But I say unto you, Swear

poses her to this sin, proves an occasion to her of committing it. || *Marry her that is divorced;* that is, her that is divorced for light causes, for other causes than the one specified. The rule is similarly stated in Matt. 19: 9. In Mark 10: 11, 12, and Luke 16: 18, the rule is stated without any exception. Thus Mark and Luke must be compared with Matthew in order to obtain the Saviour's rule; and the exception in the former part of the verse in Matthew is to be regarded as implied in the latter part. Thus a wife divorced for any other cause than the one specified, is not, properly speaking, divorced. She is still, in the view of the Saviour, a married woman. The connection between her and her husband is not dissolved. Any other man, then, marrying her, commits adultery. An examination of Matt. 19: 3—9, and Mark 10: 2—12, shows that this was, in our Saviour's time, a subject that excited deep interest; and that there was great occasion for him, as the legislator for the conscience, to pronounce a decision.

33. In further correcting the erroneous views which the Jewish teachers had imparted, Jesus spoke of the ordinary practice among the Jews of swearing, or voluntarily taking an oath. It appears throughout the Old Testament, that, from the earliest periods, the Jews were in the habit of confirming their declarations by an appeal to God; that is, by taking an oath. This was customary in ordinary conversation, and on topics not of an uncommonly serious character. See Gen. 14: 22. Ruth 1: 17. 3: 13. 1 Sam. 14: 44, 45. 20: 3, 21. 2 Sam. 3: 9, 35. 1 Kings 2: 23. 2 Kings 6: 31. Jer. 42: 5. They sometimes swore by the life of the person to whom they were speaking. 1 Sam. 1: 26. 2 Kings 2: 2. They also swore by cities and consecrated places. This practice continued in the nation, and prevailed exceedingly in the time of Christ. They used to swear, in conversation, by the altar, by Jerusalem, by heaven, by the earth, by their heads, by the temple, by the gold of the temple, &c. See Matt. 23: 16—22. Moses had enacted, on the subject of oaths (Ex. 20: 7), Thou shalt not take *the name of the Lord thy God* in vain; and (Lev. 19: 12) Ye shall not swear by *my name* falsely. In teaching on the subject of oaths, the Jewish doctors made a distinction between oaths which contained the name of God, and those which appealed to some other object. The former were, according to them, not to be violated; but the latter they represented as of a light character, imposing scarcely any obligation; and of course they could be safely violated. Compare Matt. 23. The tendency of such teaching may well be imagined. Oaths greatly multiplied among the people, and they acquired among all nations the reputation of perjurers. *Forswear thyself;* perjure thyself, take a false oath, swear falsely. || *Perform unto the Lord;* the thing respecting which thou hast sworn, perform religiously, as to the Lord, regarding it as a duty to be fulfilled to him. Probably this was the general precept which the Jewish teachers laid down; and then they proceeded to make such explanations as have been above alluded to. It was not necessary for the Saviour to enter into a detailed account of their manner, as it was well known to his hearers, and as he was intending not so much to correct erroneous additions or diminutions allowed by their teachers, as to cut up, root and branch, the whole practice of which he was speaking. Though they laid down a precept, good in some respects, as enforcing sincerity, yet they frittered it away by their explanations; and though the apparent enforcing of sincerity was a good thing, yet they did nothing that tended to correct the existing evil, and to abolish the needless, and, as then conducted, the wicked practice.

34. *But I say.* Hence, instead of

not at all: neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:

35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King:

36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black:

37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay; for whatsoever *is* more than these, cometh of evil.

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giving any precept to regulate swearing, Jesus enjoined that the practice be entirely abolished — *swear not at all.* ‖ *By heaven;* one of the oaths by which the Jews were in the habit of swearing, and which they regarded as a trifling one, which they could violate without guilt, as not expressly mentioning the name of God. ‖ *It is God's throne.* In swearing by heaven, the Jews did in reality appeal to him who sitteth on the heavens as his throne. Is. 66: 1. Hence the distinction made by the Jewish teachers between swearing by heaven and swearing by the name of God, was utterly futile, and such a method of quieting conscience utterly vain. Swearing *by heaven* is the same, in reality, as swearing *by the name of God;* and criminality in regard to such an oath is none the smaller. Since, then, such an oath, though reputed as light, is equally grave with the other, have nothing to do with it.

35. *Nor by the earth, for it is his footstool.* See Is. 66: 1. He who swears by the earth, does in reality appeal to God, and swear by him, as such an oath is a recognition of God himself, to whose dignity the earth is represented, in the Scripture, as an appendage. ‖ *The city of the great King.* Ps. 48: 2. Swearing by Jerusalem was in effect swearing by the name of God, as Jerusalem owed its dignity and sanctity to the circumstance that it was the city which God had selected for his worship.

36. *Make one hair white or black.* It is not thou that didst create thy hair and determine its color. This was ordered by the Creator. Swearing by one's head, then, is an acknowledgment of God, and is of equal force with swearing by the name of God. Again, swearing by one's head is the same as swearing by one's life. Now, thy life is not dependent on thyself; for thou canst not order even so unimportant a thing as the natural color of one hair. On God thy life depends. Swearing by thy head, then, is the same as swearing by him who made thee and keeps thee in life. The distinction, then, between oaths, as great and as small, according to the particular form of words employed, was an idle one. Oaths in reality contain an appeal to the Divine Being; and the Jewish practice in respect to them was throughout a dishonoring of God and a system of perjury.

37. *Communication;* conversation, discourse with one another. The Greek word here employed, so often used in the original in the same sense as our word *conversation,* shows that our Lord had in view the ordinary conversation of men; and that he was not intending to regulate the practice of civil courts. ‖ *Yea, yea; Nay, nay.* When you say yes, let it be understood that you do fully and absolutely mean yes; and when you say no, that you actually mean to be understood as saying no. Let there be no mental reservation; let your simple affirmation or negation be worthy of implicit reliance on the part of those with whom you converse. ‖ *Cometh of evil;* proceeds from an evil source, and is sinful.

It is not of much importance to determine whether the Saviour meant to represent as criminal the solemn administering and taking of an oath when prescribed by the civil government. The whole connection of these verses respecting oaths, shows that he had in view the prevalent practice among the Jews of using freely, in their conversa-

38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:

39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have *thy* cloak also.

tion, such oaths as he specifies. It appears also, that on a very solemn occasion, with reference to a question of most momentous import, he made a declaration on oath. Matt. 26: 63, 64. At the same time, it cannot be doubted, that if the principles which the Saviour has laid down, were universally acted on, oaths would be entirely needless; that is, if all men would cherish that simplicity and godly sincerity which would make their affirmation and their negation a perfect representation of what exists in their hearts, their simple declaration would be as much valued, in regard to truth, as an oath. And therefore the professed necessity for oaths would not exist. Since, however, men in general can be swerved from the truth by various considerations, governments have endeavored to make them peculiarly impressed, on certain occasions, with a sense of their responsibility to God, and of the danger of incurring his displeasure. But if, on *every* occasion, every man's yea was yea, and his nay, nay, oaths would of course have no place. The followers of Christ, especially, ought to be as conscientious, in every declaration, as they would be if put on oath.

38. To another topic most erroneously treated at that time, the divine Teacher directed his hearers; and unfolded the spirit that ought to be cherished, in opposition to the teachings and explanations that had come down from former times. *An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth;* that is, inflict on another an injury similar to the one he has inflicted on you. This is retaliation. In the law of Moses, retaliation was not absolutely forbidden; but it was subjected to certain regulations, which brought the crime before the judges. Thus Moses endeavored to prevent injustice. A spirit of revenge would also thus be checked. For the regulations of Moses, see Ex. 21: 23—25. Lev. 24: 19, 20. Deut. 19: 16—21. But in after times the statute of Moses was explained as giving license to a person to inflict, in his private capacity, an injury corresponding to the one he had received. Thus the spirit of private revenge was cherished.

39. *Resist not evil;* resist not, in the spirit of retaliation, an evil, that is, an injurious man, one who has done thee evil. Resist him not by doing him evil in return. Do not to him as he has done to you. ‖ *Turn to him the other also.* So far from resisting an injurious man by doing him a similar injury, submit to still further injury. If he has smitten one cheek, revenge not the insult, or the injury, by returning the blow; but rather, in meekness, not in a provoking spirit, turn to him your other cheek. Guard against a spirit of revenge; rather suffer repeated wrong, than do wrong. Compare Rom. 12: 19—21. 1 Cor. 6: 7. 1 Pet. 2: 23. 3: 9. That it is not the *mere external* act of turning the other cheek when one has been struck, that the Saviour enjoins, but that it is the spirit of forbearance, of meek submission, of quelling a revengeful temper, is manifest from the whole passage, and from the manner in which he himself bore the insult, and the injury, of being struck on the face. John 18: 22, 23.

40. *Coat. Cloak.* These words designate the two principal garments worn among the Jews. The one first named was the under, or inside garment; the other corresponded to our cloak, in being an outside garment. But it was more properly a mantle, nearly square, five or six cubits long, and as many feet broad, intended to be wrapped around the body, or worn over the shoulders. This garment

41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.

43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy:

44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you;

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was sometimes employed by the poor as a covering in sleep during the night. Hence Moses enacted that this garment, if given as a pledge, should not be retained over night. Ex. 22: 26, 27. Deut. 24: 13. In conformity, probably, to such a practice, Jesus spoke of the under garment being taken away from a person. The idea of the Saviour in this verse is, If a person seeks to draw thee into controversy, and to take one of thy garments, indulge not a spirit of revenge; instead of retaliating, give up to him thy mantle also, and submit to any inconvenience.

41. *Compel.* In Persia, the king's orders were conveyed by public couriers, who had changes of horses at suitable distances, and who were also empowered to press into service any person, or any thing, that might be needed for performing the king's business. The word which expressed this compulsion to the public service was adopted in other countries to express a similar idea. An instance of this compulsory service is mentioned in Matt. 27: 32, and Mark 15: 21. It may easily be conceived that a man thus ordered by public authority, and diverted from his own business, would cherish bitter feelings towards the government, or the officer who compelled him, and would gladly make his escape. This is a case somewhat akin, at least as to the temper which it might excite, and as to the temper in which it should be met, to those just produced. Jesus enjoined that it be met in a spirit of accommodating submission, and with a willingness even to do and to bear double of what was demanded. Let there be no malice, but, on the contrary, a readiness to exceed the required limit in rendering service.

42. *Him that asketh thee.* It is taken for granted, that the person really needs the favor which he asks. In such a case, give. Exercise no malignant, unkind feelings, but let love prevail. And, as a consequence, if you refuse a request, be sure that you do not refuse it under the influence of an unkind, unaccommodating spirit. ‖ *Borrow of thee;* when he really needs what he asks for, and will be subjected to privation if he does not obtain what he seeks, do not repulse him; but meet his request in kindness and accommodation.

43. *It hath been said;* that is, by the ancient teachers. To another perversion, introduced in former times, Jesus next directed his hearers; and exhibited the proper view of the subject. ‖ *Thy neighbor.* Lev. 19: 18. This word, like the word *brother*, properly signified *any other person.* Besides this broad signification, it was used, in a limited sense, to mean a relative, a friend, one belonging to the same country, or professing the same religion. This more limited signification was applied to the word by the Jewish teachers; and hence they made the addition which here follows — *and hate thine enemy.* The word *enemy* was applicable not only to persons who belonged to a nation engaged in hostilities with the Jews, but to people of other nations and other religions than their own. The Jews were taught to love Jews; but were permitted, by their teachers here spoken of, to hate people of other nations.

44. *Love your enemies;* others besides those of your own country and of your own religion; those, even, who

45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?

47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more *than others?* do not even the publicans so?

48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.

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cherish ill-will towards you, as is explained in the following clauses. In the precept requiring us to *love* our enemies, we are not required, when seeing the manifestation of ill-will and unholy character, to be conscious of a delight in the character of such persons; but to cherish that sort of love, which is the opposite of ill-will, of bitter feeling, and of desire to take vengeance; that love which would make us regard them with compassion, with desire for their true welfare, with readiness to do them a favor; and which would make us glad at their prosperity and real happiness.

45. *Children of your Father;* like your Father in heaven, as to your affections and conduct towards others. As children bear a resemblance to their parents, and imbibe their sentiments, so that often it may be known who are the parents of certain children, so the disciples of Jesus, by manifesting the tempers of mind here enjoined, show a resemblance to God, and prove themselves to be his children. ‖ *On the evil and on the good, on the just and on the unjust;* on the evil as well as on the good; on the righteous and on the unrighteous too. He blesses enemies as well as friends. He confines not his benevolence within narrow limits.

46. *Love them which love you;* that is, love them *only*, as is explained in the next verse. ‖ *Publicans;* persons who collected the revenue and the taxes imposed by the Roman government. See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, III. 5. The existence of such officers constantly reminded the Jews of the unpleasant fact that they were in subjection to a foreign power. These collectors were also frequently notorious for their extortion. As a class of men, they were therefore unpopular, and the very name of publican was odious. But even the publicans, so generally disesteemed, could love those who loved them. What ground of reward, then, could there be in any person's cherishing so narrow an affection?

47. *Salute.* Salutation, as performed among the Jews, was a marked expression of one's good wishes and affection for another. The expressions employed amounted to an interceding for blessings to rest upon the person. Among other forms of salutation, we find these — Be thou blessed of Jehovah; may Jehovah be with thee; peace, that is, all prosperity, be thine. The gestures and inflections of the body on such occasions were also expressions of marked respect.

48. *Perfect;* complete, free from defect, as to the extent of your benevolent regards. ‖ *Even as your Father.* Let your heavenly Father be your model, who is kind to the evil as well as to the good. Since he is thus perfect, complete in benevolent feelings and conduct, so be ye; and let not your benevolence be so imperfect, so incomplete, as to embrace only a select few. Luke expresses the same thought in 6: 36, by saying. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. The force of the expression in Luke is found in the word *as*. Let your mercy, or kind regards, be like your heavenly Father's; make him your pattern.

Lovely spirit of Christianity! May it dwell in our hearts, embracing strangers as well as friends, poor and rich, bond and free; and fitting us for

CHAPTER VI.

TAKE heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.

2 Therefore, when thou doest *thine* alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:

4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly.

5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are:* for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

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the world of purity and love! Read Luke 10: 25—37.

Thus, in these several instances, Jesus showed that he came to *fulfil*, to fill up, to complete, and to enforce the law. And as a lawgiver for the conscience, he laid down the great principles of moral and religious conduct.

CHAPTER VI.

1. Jesus proceeded to expose the erroneous opinions and practices which prevailed in his time respecting religious duties. *Alms;* acts of charity. In the place of the word here rendered *alms*, some Greek manuscripts and editions of the Greek Testament have a word which signifies *righteousness*, and which in this place may mean *religious duties*. In accordance with this suggestion, this verse may be regarded as a general precept, cautioning against a wrong motive in our religious duties; and the subsequent verses, as far as to the 19th, contain special applications of this caution. ‖ *To be seen of them;* so as to be applauded by them. These words contain the force of the caution. We are not forbidden to perform a duty in public, before men; but we are forbidden to do it in an ostentatious manner, with a desire to attract attention, and to receive their praise. Compare Matt. 5: 16. ‖ *Otherwise;* that is, if, in disregard of my caution, your motive be to attract the notice and applause of men, you cannot justly expect the favor of God.

2. *Sound a trumpet before thee;* endeavor to make thy act of kindness publicly known. ‖ *Hypocrites;* persons ambitious principally for the *reputation* of goodness, such as the Pharisees in general, and their adherents. ‖ *Synagogues.* The word here used, in the original, commonly means *Jewish places of worship;* in this verse it appears to mean *collections of people.* ‖ *Glory;* applause, honor. ‖ *Their reward.* They obtain what they seek — the applause of men. And that is the whole of their reward.

3. *Left hand — right hand.* Make not the slightest effort to let thy deeds of charity be known abroad.

4. *Reward thee openly.* Luke 14: 14. 1 Tim. 5: 25. Such is the divine arrangement of things, that a good man is generally known to be such, without any effort to make himself known; so that, both in this world and in the next, God rewards the righteous. The inward consciousness of integrity is itself a reward; and the esteem of worthy men, spontaneously bestowed, is a reward. But most of all will the righteous be rewarded, when that takes place which is spoken of in Matt. 25: 34, &c.

5. *Synagogues.* See v. 2. The

6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and, when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do:* for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.

8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name:

10 Thy kingdom come: thy will be done, in earth as *it is* in heaven:

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public places of worship, as well as any collection of people, furnished a favorable opportunity for an ostentatious performance of prayer. ‖ *Corners of the streets;* where a person might be noticed from several quarters. There were certain hours, at which prayer was enjoined; and some, who were strict as to externals, would perform their devotions at the appointed moment, wherever they were, and in whatever business they were engaged. Some would purposely so arrange their affairs, that the appointed time for offering a prayer might find them in public, at the corner of some street, and thus furnish them a favorable opportunity to be seen praying.

6. *Closet;* retired room. In the Jewish houses, there was usually an upper room devoted to retirement. Here prayer could be performed with the utmost secrecy.

7. *Vain repetitions.* Intensity of feeling sometimes leads to repetition, as in Matt. 26: 44. 2 Cor. 12: 8. But the Saviour cautioned against a vain array of words, a verbose manner of addressing God, as if the efficacy of prayer depended upon the number and order of the words. ‖ *The heathen;* people not Jews, and not instructed respecting God. See 1 Kings 18: 26. Much regard was paid, among some of the heathen, to having a certain number of prayers, and having the words properly arranged, lest, through some failure as to the quantity of prayers, or as to the arrangement of expressions, their deities should refuse to listen. The Jews, too, needed cautions on this point. It was a current maxim with them, that a person "who multiplies prayer [that is, makes many prayers] is heard." Many of their prayers, also, consisted of different words importing the same thing; thus, while they did not always repeat the same words, they repeated the same ideas in varied phrases. Doubtless many among them, as well as among the heathen, had no better view of God than to suppose, that if one form of speech would not please him, another might.

8. *Your Father knoweth.* Prayer is not designed to communicate information to God, nor to weary him into compliance.

9. *After this manner.* The Saviour gave a specimen of prayer, showing the spirit which should pervade our prayers. This specimen is remarkably brief, but very comprehensive, showing that "much speaking" is not necessary for acceptance. It breathes the spirit of love, and reverence, and confidence towards God; of desire for universal obedience, throughout the world, to the will of God; of great moderation in respect to earthly good; of desire for pardon; and of forgiveness towards our fellow-men. ‖ *Hallowed;* revered, regarded as sacred. ‖ *Thy name;* that is, thou. Mayst thou be revered.

10. *Thy kingdom;* the reign of God on earth; that is, the new dispensation by the Messiah. See on 3: 2. A most fitting petition at that time, and never inappropriate, till every heart

11 Give us this day our daily bread:

12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors:

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

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shall be thoroughly pervaded by the principles of the Messiah's religion. ‖ *Thy will be done;* universal submission and obedience be paid to thy will.

11. *This day;* or, as Luke expresses it (11 : 3), *day by day.* ‖ *Daily bread.* The word *bread* is equivalent to the word *food.* The word here rendered *daily* is also equivalent to the words *necessary for our subsistence.* A superfluity of worldly good, and treasures laid up for many years, are not represented in the Bible as desirable. Luke 12 : 13—21. Matt. 6 : 19.

12. *Debts;* faults, sins. In the Chaldee language, which had influence in forming the diction of the New Testament, the word *debt* is used to signify *delinquency, fault.* So here, as appears from the 14th verse, and from Luke 11 : 4. ‖ *As we forgive our debtors;* in like manner as we forgive those who have committed faults against us—a suggestion worthy of very distinct notice: according to our spirit of forgiveness to others, may we receive forgiveness from thee. How can a person of an unrelenting, unforgiving temper, adopt this petition? And, if he should, what is he thus imprecating upon himself!

13. *Temptation;* trials which may induce a person to commit sin. ‖ *Lead us not.* This language, compared with scriptural modes of speaking, and with passages relating to men's sins, does not imply that God does in any instance induce men to sin. Compare James 1 : 13. In the very simple modes of expression which prevailed among the ancient Hebrews, whatever things occurred in the providence of God, were ascribed directly to him, without overlooking, at the same time, the guilt, or the virtue, which might pertain to men in respect to those very things which are ascribed to God. See Is. 45 : 6, 7. Amos 3 : 6. As they thus ascribed to the God of providence things that took place, without intending to overlook the evil or the good pertaining to the instrument, they also at one time ascribed to God what at another time they ascribed to man, or to Satan. Compare 2 Sam. 24 : 1, with 1 Chron. 21 : 1. A connecting together of these two views may be seen in Is. 10 : 5—7. Now, if, in view of these considerations, we carefully examine such a passage as Ps. 141 : 4, we shall be at no loss in understanding this petition in our Lord's prayer to mean, Suffer us not to fall into temptation. Compare also Matt. 26 : 41. 1 Cor. 10 : 13. ‖ *From evil;* from wickedness, or, from the evil one. ‖ *The kingdom,* to thee belongs *kingly authority;* thou art a sovereign king. Ps. 145 : 11—13. Dan. 4 : 34. ‖ *The power;* to thee belongs power. ‖ *The glory;* to thee belongs *consummate dignity.* ‖ *Amen.* This word, at the end of a prayer, or following any very weighty sentiment, is an expression of hearty assent; as much as to say, May it be so. It is derived from a Hebrew word which signifies *faithfulness, firmness.*

This concluding expression of our Lord's prayer may be regarded as an ascription of all dignity and excellence to God; and as thus presenting in one breath the reasons for cherishing that reverence, and esteem, and confidence towards God, which the prayer so eminently displays. This doxology is not added to the prayer as recorded by Luke, 11 : 2—4.

14, 15. We are all sinners against God, needing, and professing to desire, forgiveness from him, and dependent on his mercy for forgiveness. How unsuitable, then, that our fellow-men, who may have done us wrong, and who may be in our power, should find in us an unforgiving spirit! If they

15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

16 Moreover, when ye fast, be not as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.

17 But thou, when thou fast-

implore mercy in vain from us, how can we expect to receive mercy from God? especially as the offences of any man against *us*, when compared with our sins against God, are but as a mite to a mountain. God will conduct towards us according to the spirit which we habitually cherish. Ps. 18: 25, 26. 1 John 4: 20. Matt. 18: 21—35. See also Luke 17: 3, 4.

16. Jesus proceeded to correct the erroneous views and practices which prevailed in relation to fasting. Fasting, for professedly religious purposes, was frequent, especially among the Pharisees. See Luke 18: 12. Jesus, in this passage, neither enjoined the practice, nor disapproved of it. It seems to have been taken for granted, that his disciples would observe seasons of fasting and special devotion. He here only reproved the spirit which the Pharisees manifested; and showed in what spirit fasting should be performed. *Of a sad countenance.* There was much external show of sorrow in the fasting of the Pharisees. On such occasions, their whole person exhibited a sad and squalid appearance. Ashes were put upon their heads and faces, and they were forbidden to wash any part of their bodies. ‖ *Disfigure their faces;* by neglecting the ordinary washing and anointing, the dressing of the hair and the beard, and by putting ashes upon their faces. For such methods of indicating sorrow, see 2 Sam. 1: 2. Ezek. 27: 30. See also Jonah 3: 6.

17. *Anoint—wash.* Let the person-

est, anoint thy head, and wash thy face;

18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father, which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.

19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:

al appearance be as it is on other days; let there be nothing external to attract notice. Anointing the head was common among the Jews; and declining to anoint the head was an indication of being in sorrowful circumstances. 2 Sam. 12: 20. Eccl. 9: 8. Neglecting to wash the face and to anoint the head, therefore, was adapted to draw the attention of others; and if this neglect arose from respect to the fast-day, not from domestic or personal affliction, it would be regarded as indicative of piety.

19. Jesus next introduced another subject, respecting which he gave cautions that are always necessary; namely, attachment to earthly riches, and anxiety respecting earthly good. *Moth.* Clothes were possessed in large quantities by wealthy men of the East, as the fashions of garments were not changeable. Hence their treasures were in danger from moths. See James 5: 2. Changes of raiment are spoken of in the Bible in a manner which shows that they were regarded as a very considerable part of a person's wealth. See Gen. 45: 22. 2 Kings 5: 5, 22, 23. ‖ *Rust.* Compare James 5: 3. Allusion is probably made here to the rust which gathers upon metals, and which seems to be eating them. The word in the original contains the idea of eating, or corroding. ‖ *Break through.* This form of expression in regard to thieves, was drawn from the circumstance that the walls of houses in Palestine were frequently built of clay, or unburnt tiles. The word,

20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal.

21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

22 The light of the body is the eye: If therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light:

23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If, therefore, the light that is in thee be darkness, how great *is* that darkness!

24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

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having, perhaps, originated from that circumstance, might have been retained in application to all sorts of houses.

The perishable nature of earthly treasures is here distinctly exhibited, as a dissuasive from cherishing the spirit of accumulation. Of whatever our wealth consists, whether raiment, or the fruits of the earth, or gold and silver, it is exceedingly frail, and our hold upon it is equally feeble.

21. *Your heart;* your affections. How suitable that our affections should be placed, not upon treasures that decay, and that will leave the heart comfortless, but upon treasures beyond the reach of accident and dissolution, and which will impart ever-enduring bliss!

22. The Saviour enforced his caution by an illustration drawn from the natural body. The body is furnished with a lamp, that is, the eye, which enables it to discern all objects around, and properly to use its powers. If the eye is in a healthy condition, the body has light, and can rightly direct its energies. But if the eye be diseased, the lamp is either gone out, or burns dimly, and thus leaves the man to grope in the dark, to misapply his efforts, and to fail of his end; or it burns in a flickering, fitful manner, so as to dazzle and deceive. How miserable the man whose directory either fails to guide, or misleads! In so unhappy a state, as regards his highest interest, is the man who hoards up treasure on earth, to the neglect of heavenly treasure. *The light of the body;* more properly, the lamp. ‖ *Single;* sound, in a healthy state, capable of rightly discerning objects, seeing them as they are.

23. *Evil;* disordered, not properly performing its office, not rightly presenting objects of sight. ‖ *If, therefore, the light that is in thee, &c.* This is the application of the simile: If that within thee which ought to enlighten, is itself shrouded with darkness, how great and utter the darkness! If it give forth a false light, how miserable the condition! If thy mind, thy inward powers, be perverted, how can there be a right guidance?

24. Jesus proceeded to dissuade from the love of earthly treasure, by declaring the impossibility of grasping both worldly good and heavenly good. These two are in their nature opposite, and eager devotion to worldly good must incur the loss of heavenly good; just as no man can perform the will, at the same time, of two masters, the interests and commands of one of whom are at variance with those of the other. *Two masters;* of opposite characters and claims, as appears by the last clause of the verse. ‖ *Hate — despise.* Such words as these are sometimes employed in the Bible, in a comparative, rather than in an absolute, sense; and they express all degrees of opposition, from indifference and dislike, up to positive hatred. See Deut. 21: 15—17. Mal. 1: 2, 3, quoted in Rom. 9: 13. Luke 14: 26.

25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?

26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?

27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?

28 And why take ye thought

In the present instance, they express the opposite of attachment; such an indifference, or dislike, as leads to neglect. ‖ *Mammon.* The name of a heathen deity, who was supposed to preside over wealth; the god of wealth. This imagined deity is here placed in contrast with the true God. God and Mammon are represented as two masters, or lords; to both of whom it is not possible for a man to render service at the same time. The simple idea conveyed is, You cannot be devoted to the attaining of worldly good and to the attaining of heavenly good at the same time. The two things are in contrast with each other. He who would grasp one, and hold it with all his might, cannot grasp the other also.

By three distinct considerations, the Saviour here cautioned his disciples against the desire of earthly treasures: — 1. The perishable nature of earthly treasures, and the consequent impropriety of placing the affections upon them. 2. The pursuit of worldly good, as a grand object, is a perversion of our powers, and shows a disordered state of mind, in regard to our true welfare. 3. The impossibility of uniting together the pursuit of heaven and the pursuit of earth. Compare Matt. 19: 16—26. Mark 10: 17—27. Luke 12: 13—21. 18: 18—27. 1 Tim. 6: 9, 10, 17.

25. Having thus cautioned his disciples against the love of this world (compare 1 John 2: 15—17), Jesus proceeded to caution them against anxiety in regard to a subsistence. *Take no thought;* cherish no anxiety. So in Phil. 4: 6. ‖ *Is not the life, &c.* An argument to enforce the preceding exhortation. The amount of it is this: Life, which God has bestowed, is a matter of far greater importance than food. Since he has bestowed the greater blessing, trust in him for the smaller; especially as the smaller, the food, is necessary, that the life may accomplish the purpose for which it was bestowed. Life was bestowed not for a trifling purpose; particularly the life of those who become subjects of the Messiah, and are true children of God. God will not permit life to fail of its object, through his failing to bestow needed food. ‖ *The body than raiment?* He who gave us bodies, will also furnish the clothing which they need, in order to be preserved from perishing, and from failing to answer the end for which they were given. The body is a greater gift than its clothing; trust, then, for clothing to him who bestowed the body. The word translated *more*, in this verse, signifies *a more important thing, a matter of higher value.*

26. *Better;* more valuable.

27. *One cubit to his stature.* It is of little consequence, if we judge according to the real importance of things, whether we be tall or not; and thus, in respect to our real interests, an addition made to our height would be a trifling thing. If all our anxiety cannot avail for the procuring of such a trifle, certainly, then, anxiety in regard to our lives ought not to be cherished. See Luke 12: 25, 26. It is probable, however, that the word here rendered *stature* is equivalent to our word *age*, as it is in John 9: 21, 23, and Heb. 11: 11. Then the idea will be, Which of you, by cherishing anxiety, can add a cubit to his life? that

for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:

29 And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, *shall he* not much more *clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

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is (see Luke 12: 26), *can make the smallest addition to his age?* The application of the cubit, a measure of length, to time, is similar to the expression in Ps. 39: 5—"Thou hast made my days as an hand breadth;" thus happily versified by Dr. Watts:

"A span is all that we can boast,
An inch or two of time."

Life was frequently spoken of, by the Hebrews, as a journey, or a pilgrimage. Now, a cubit, when compared with a journey, is a very small thing.

29. *Glory;* splendor. Compare 1 Kings, 10th chapter.

30. *Grass.* The original word is of more extensive import than our word *grass*, and is equivalent to *herbage*, the smaller growth of the field, which in the East was employed for fuel. ‖ *Oven.* Ovens were of various kinds. The cakes (for bread was not made in the shape of our loaves) were often baked by placing the dough on the outside of the oven, while the fire was burning within. They sometimes had movable ovens, constructed of brick, and sometimes portable ones, of brass. Unleavened cakes were made of the thickness of a knife; leavened cakes, of the thickness of a little finger.

32. *Gentiles;* people who were not Jews, and consequently not enjoying religious advantages. *They* are seeking anxiously what they shall eat, and what they shall drink. *They* know not the providential care of the true God; and we might expect from *them* an anxious seeking for such things. For *you*, however, instructed in divine truth, how unbecoming to be thus anxious!

33. *Kingdom of God;* spiritual blessings, such as the new dispensation, when rightly viewed, proposes both here and hereafter; in opposition to mere temporal good. The direction is of the same import as that contained in v. 20. ‖ *His righteousness;* that is, the true integrity towards man and God, true piety, which God requires. The possessive case is used in the Bible with great latitude. Here, *his righteousness* does not mean, righteousness *which he possesses*, but that *which he requires of men.* ‖ *All these things;* all the things just spoken of; that is, all things necessary for eating, drinking, and clothing; necessary for life. Wealth is not promised; but the support of life is promised. And such are the providential arrangements, that true piety will, in general, secure whatever is necessary for subsistence, if not for comfort. For, besides other considerations, piety to God requires moderation, and temperance, and industry in our proper calling. God will not withhold his blessing, but in various ways, frequently unthought of, will provide for his people. 1 Tim. 4: 8. 6: 8. If we seek, in true piety, for heavenly treasure, we shall not only

34 Take, therefore, no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day *is* the evil thereof.

CHAPTER VII.

JUDGE not, that ye be not judged.

2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye: and, behold, a beam *is* in thine own eye?

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have the present comforts of piety and the blissful hope of eternal life, but, in addition, whatever is needful for the present life.

34. *The evil thereof;* the care and perplexity pertaining to it. For any one day, the perplexity, or care, properly pertaining to it, is enough. Bring not, in addition, the care and trouble belonging to the morrow.

Does the Saviour discourage all concern about the future days, or years, of our lives? No. He dissuades us from perplexing anxiety about the future, and from a distrustful fear that our necessities will not be provided for. The proper business of each day is to be performed in that day, and its anxieties are not to be increased by anticipating the wants of following days. Yet such is the plan of divine providence, that the performance of daily duties in their proper time is followed with blessings in days and years yet to come. As in the case of the farmer: It is his duty, at certain times, to sow; but the performance of this duty is succeeded by blessings months afterwards. He would transgress the Saviour's directions, if, to the care and trouble connected with sowing, he should add misgivings and perplexity respecting the result of his labors. A similar remark may be made in reference to every human employment.

CHAPTER VII.

1. The Saviour proceeded to caution his hearers against forming harsh judgments respecting their fellow-men. A tendency to this always exists; but it was probably very much in danger of being indulged in the times of our Saviour, when those who were reputed as pious cherished a very diminutive view of others. See Luke 18: 11. *Judge.* This word has respect here to the forming and expressing of unfavorable opinions respecting others. And we are cautioned against this from the consideration, that, if we abstain from the exercise of a censorious spirit, others will not exercise such a spirit towards us.

2. *It shall be measured to you again;* you will be treated as you treat others. Compare Luke 6: 37, 38. The rule is of very extensive application, and has a bearing upon our acceptance with God, as well as upon our enjoying favor with men. In this connection, however, it seems to relate to our intercourse with our fellow-men.

3. *Mote — beam;* that is, a very small thing, and a very large thing. A man who cherishes a censorious spirit, and is disposed to express harsh judgments respecting others, is, in all probability, guilty of far greater faults than those which he condemns; so that, in comparison, those which he condemns are, to his own, as a mote to a beam, or as a twig to the trunk of a tree. ‖ *Brother.* Compare 5: 22.

4. *How;* with what appearance of propriety?

5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

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5. *First*, &c. Let your attention be directed principally to the correction of your own faults. When you have removed your own, which may be incomparably worse than your neighbor's, then you may be more able rightly to judge of his.

6. *Dogs*, in Oriental cities, are frequently very insolent and ravenous. 1 Kings 14: 11. 16: 4. 21: 23, 24. Jer. 15: 3. Persons who treat others in an insolent and injurious manner, are compared to them. Ps. 22: 16, 20. Phil. 3: 2. || *Holy;* that which has been consecrated to God. Here, as dogs are spoken of, the word literally refers to pieces of meat offered in sacrifice. || *Swine* are universally regarded as uncleanly animals, indisposed to distinguish nice and valuable articles, consuming what but for them would be thrown away. || *Trample them;* that is, lest the swine trample the pearls under their feet. || *Turn again;* lest the dogs turn around after having consumed the meat, and commence their ravages upon your persons. Dogs have been known, in Oriental cities, during the night, to attack even living men. The amount of the proverbial language in this verse is, Offer not your favors to men who will not value them, and who will turn your very kindness into an occasion of abusing you. In application to the apostles, to whom it seems to have specially referred, the idea was, Deliver not your instructions to men who will contemptuously reject them. Compare Matt. 10: 14. Luke 10: 10, 11. Prov. 9: 8. 23: 9. This verse may contain only the substance of what the Saviour said to his disciples on this topic. He may have enlarged upon it It did not, perhaps, come within the scope of Matthew's design to give more than a mere hint of some things which the Saviour said, while he more fully communicated what the Saviour said on other topics.

7. Encouragements are now presented for affectionate, confiding prayer to God. In 6: 7—15, Jesus distinctly exhibited the spirit in which we should pray; and now he presents encouragements. The three forms of expression contained in this verse, present but one and the same idea.

8. The consideration here presented seems to be this: It commonly happens, that a person who needs a favor, and seeks it in a proper manner, and from the proper individual, obtains it; that a person searching for a thing properly, that is, with due wariness, and diligence, and perseverance, finds it; that a person seeking admission into a house in a proper manner, gains admission. The Saviour wished also to make the impression, that as, in common life, asking is necessary to obtaining, so asking of God — that is, praying — is necessary in order to receive favors from him.

9, 10. Prayer is here encouraged, by noticing the manner in which parents treat the requests of their children. God is our heavenly Father.

11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

13 Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life; and few there be that find it.

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11. *Being evil;* though ye be sinners, and disposed to be selfish. ‖ *Your Father;* who is perfectly good and merciful. See Luke 11: 9—13.

12. The connection between the idea in this verse and the preceding topic, is not very obvious. The verse may be a mere mention of a new topic, on which the Saviour enlarged, and Matthew may have furnished us only with a summary of what he said. The benignity which is ascribed to our heavenly Father, in the preceding verse, might, however, very naturally suggest a principle that should regulate our conduct towards one another. The principle is easily understood, and is capable of constant and universal application. Always conduct, in reference to every person, in such a manner as you would reasonably and justly wish him, in a change of circumstances, you being in his place and he in yours, to conduct towards you. ‖ *The law and the prophets;* that is, the books of the Old Testament. See on 5: 17. The rule which the Saviour had given, is the substance of the moral instructions contained in the Old Testament, respecting mutual duties. See Matt. 22: 35—40.

13, 14. Jesus turned the attention of his hearers directly to the future state. Two objects are presented—*destruction*, that is, future misery; *life*, that is, future happiness. To these two objects, entirely diverse in their nature, the different moral courses of men are tending. Jesus enjoins, that men seek for *life*, future bliss; and that they pursue the appropriate course for its attainment. *Strait gate;* narrow gate. Heaven, the seat of *life*, or bliss, is represented as a mansion, or a place of safety, to which a particular road conducts. This road is *narrow*, and the gate at its entrance is *narrow;* it does not give opportunities of turning to the right hand or to the left. Those who walk in it, must keep constantly before them the object to be gained, and press towards it, regardless of the attractions that might divert them from a steady, onward progress. In this figurative manner a holy life is shadowed forth; regulated by the principles of piety, restrained by a regard to God's will from indulging inclinations that are opposite to duty. Luke 13: 24. Prov. 4: 27. Ps. 1: 1. ‖ *Wide—broad.* On the contrary, the road which conducts to the seat of future misery is abundantly wide. This road is the course of sin. Those who live in sin, do not subject themselves to the restraints of piety, but allow themselves in various wrong indulgences.

The difficulties and restraints connected with a life of piety, and to be submitted to by those who would enter heaven, do not arise from the nature of holiness, but from the fact that men are naturally sinful and disinclined to the service of God. The way of holiness is in opposition to the natural desires of the human heart, and requires self-denial. Matt. 16: 24. 19: 17, 21, 22. Eph. 2: 1—3. Perfectly holy beings find only delight in obedience to God; and the difficulties which pious men experience, are to be put to

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves:

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

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the account of sin, or arise from the fact that the present is intended as a world of probation. So, on the other hand, if the way of sin is broad, free from many restraints, and presenting ample opportunities for indulgence, it is not because sin, in itself, is pleasant; but because the pleasures of depravity are harmonious with hearts of depravity. But, be it remembered, the end of these two roads will be reached ere long; and a recompense will be made to each man, according to God's judgment of the real character of each.

15. Jesus next cautioned his followers against false teachers of religion, whose external professions would be fair, but whose real characters would be contrary to godliness. *Prophets.* This word, besides meaning men endowed with the gift of foretelling future events, has also the signification of *religious teachers.* ‖ *Sheep's clothing,—ravening wolves.* In external appearance, they are innocent, but within, they cherish evil designs, seeking to promote their own interests at your expense. Such were the Pharisees: Matt. 23: 14, 25, 28. Such were some in after times. See Acts 20: 29, 30. 2 Pet. 2: 1—3.

16. *Ye shall know them;* you may know them; you will be able to distinguish them. ‖ *Fruits;* actions, conduct. Their hearts not being right, their lives will not be habitually right.

17. *Corrupt tree;* a tree of bad quality. A poisonous tree cannot produce wholesome fruit. ‖ *Evil fruit;* hurtful fruit.

20. *Wherefore, &c.* Professed religious teachers are represented by trees: their habitual conduct is represented by the fruit of trees. Compare Luke 6: 45. The method of judging, here spoken of, will always hold, when the conduct of religious teachers is at variance with purity and propriety. To such men, our confidence ought not to be extended. It is not, however, solely by the external conduct of religious teachers, that we are to form a judgment respecting them. In times when the office of a religious teacher is attended with respect, and, in many instances, affords alluring opportunities for gratifying literary taste, and for securing external ease and dignity, many may be drawn into the sacred office, whose hearts are not right, while yet their lives may not exhibit any marked deficiency of religious principle; just as some infidels, through the general prevalence of external morality, may be guilty of no flagrant crimes. We are, therefore, furnished with additional means of judging. For while, on the one hand, unholy conduct is a sufficient proof that a man ought not to be received as a religious teacher, however correct his professed religious principles may be, we learn, on the other, from the Holy Scriptures, what are the principles of true religion. And those who can read and judge for themselves respecting the truths of religion, are required to bring the *principles* of professed teachers, as well as their *conduct*, to the test. See 1 John 4: 1—3.

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that hareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended,

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21. *Not every one that saith, &c* A mere profession of the doctrine of Christ, or of attachment to him, is not sufficient for securing the blessings of the Messiah's reign. A spirit of obedience to the will of God is requisite.

22. *In that day.* This expression occurs in Luke 10: 12, and is explained by v. 14, as meaning *the day of judgment.* Compare also Matt. 11: 22, 24, with Luke 10: 12. See also 2 Tim. 4: 8. 1: 18. || *To me.* The Messiah will be the final Judge. John 5: 22. Rom. 14: 10. 2 Cor. 5: 10. Our minds are thus directed to the day of judgment, when all will be judged according to their deeds, and according to the secret purposes of their hearts. 2 Cor. 5: 10. 1 Cor. 4: 5. At that time, it will be seen that a mere external profession of subjection to the Messiah, is of no avail. || *Prophesied in thy name;* performed the part of a religious teacher professing to acknowledge thine authority. See on the word *prophets*, in v. 15. || *Wonderful works;* miracles.

23. *Profess;* publicly declare. || *Knew.* The word translated *know* has a more extensive meaning in the original than the word *know* in our ordinary use. It frequently contains the additional idea of *approving, acknowledging, favorably esteeming.* So here; I never acknowledged you as my true subjects.

Thus the Saviour enforces the thought that nothing can supply the lack of a spirit of genuine obedience to God. A religious teacher will not be shielded, by his office, from the displeasure of the final Judge, if he have not possessed the spirit of obedience. Neither the casting out of demons, nor *any* miraculous works, can atone for the want of this spirit. Christ will not acknowledge us, in the day of judgment, as his followers, whatever have been our professions or employments during life, unless it has been our steady aim to "do the will of his Father." Compare 1 Cor. 13: 1—3. Gal. 6: 15.

24. In view of the instructions which the Saviour had imparted, and particularly of the need of practical obedience to his instructions, he brought his discourse to a conclusion, by a vivid representation of the wisdom displayed by the man who should, in heart and life, yield obedience to his instructions; and of the folly of the man, who, after hearing, should neglect and disobey. *A rock;* a foundation of rock.

25, 27. The particulars mentioned in these verses, are indicative of stormy weather, which prevails during

and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

29 For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHEN he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.

2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

3 And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touchèd him, saying, I will; be thou clean: and

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the wintry season in Palestine. Thunder and lightning, rain and hail, are frequent; the winter torrents (here called *floods*) pour down their waters, and the rivers are swollen. By the impetuous flowing of those torrents, by the winds and violent rains, a house would be greatly endangered, if built on a slight foundation. In these circumstances, a considerate man would build his house on a solid foundation. So true wisdom would prompt a person to obey the instructions which the great Teacher has here given. And, on the contrary, unwise and inconsiderate as would be the man, who, in such circumstances, should build a house "without a foundation" (Luke 6: 49), on the mere sand, so is he who heeds not the teachings of the Messiah. He is preparing for certain and dreadful ruin.

28. *Doctrine;* teaching, including both matter and manner.

29. *Having authority.* Jesus spoke as an authoritative teacher, whose instructions, as coming from him, the Messiah, the Lord of the new dispensation, were to be received as guiding truths. Such, too, was his manner of addressing the people, that the judgment was informed, the conscience was aroused, the heart was moved. John 7: 46. ‖ *Not as the scribes.* See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, III. 3. The teaching of the scribes consisted very much in vain disputations and trifling controversies. Neither as to the matter which they furnished, nor as to the manner, did they properly guide the conscience, or move the heart, or persuade to action.

CHAPTER VIII.

2. *A leper.* The leprosy was a very unpleasant disease, frequent in Eastern countries. It probably affected persons internally, some time before it made its appearance on the skin. It then showed itself in spots, which gradually spread so as to cover the whole body. Its progress was not rapid. A person leprous from his birth, sometimes lived as many as fifty years; those who became subsequently affected with it, as many as twenty years. The disorder occasioned dreadful misery, and at length terminated life suddenly. It was believed to be hereditary, and to be contagious. Hence Moses required that leprous persons should be regarded as unclean, and be debarred from intercourse with society. Lev. 13. There were four kinds of real leprosy, of which one was exceedingly virulent, and affected the body in a most awful manner. The most virulent species is incurable by human art. The less virulent kinds can be cured, if attended to at their commencement; but even they are incurable, if the disease has been of long continuance. The leprosy was sometimes inflicted as a special judgment from God. Num. 12: 1—10. 2 Kings 5: 27. 2 Chron. 26: 16—21. ‖ *Worshipped;* paid special respect and homage. See on 2: 11. Compare Mark 1: 40, and Luke 5: 12. ‖ *Lord.* The word thus rendered was the one

immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

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commonly employed in respectful address to a superior. It differed from our word *sir* in its uniformly containing an acknowledgment of superiority on the part of him to whom it was addressed. It is sometimes rightly translated by our word *sir*. See Matt. 13: 27. 21: 30. 27: 63. John 4: 11, 15, 19, 49. || *Thou canst make me clean.* Lepers were regarded by the law of Moses (see Lev. 13) as ceremonially unclean. The request of the leprous man, then, was, that he might be cured of his disorder, so as to be regarded as cleansed, and to be admitted again into society. He expressed full confidence in the *power* of Jesus; and his remark implied a petition that Jesus would be pleased to exercise that power. He had, doubtless, heard of some instances of healing performed by the Saviour. See 4: 24. Such a confidence was always acceptable to the Saviour. Compare Matt. 9: 2, 28, 29.

4. *Show thyself to the priest.* Leprous persons, when healed, were required to see the priest, that he might judge whether the leprosy was healed, and might attend to the observances prescribed, as preparatory to the man's entering again into society. See Lev. 14. || *Offer the gift.* Compare Lev. 14: 10, &c., 21, &c. || *For a testimony unto them;* that is, to the people. The presenting in public of an offering to the Lord, was a testimony, or evidence, of the leper's being cleansed. It was incumbent, then, on the man to go to the temple in Jerusalem, where the officiating priests were. This circumstance may explain the injunction of Jesus, *Tell no man;* say nothing on the subject, that is, for the present. Jesus directed the man to attend to the prescribed ceremonies without delay, so as to lose no time in being restored to the privileges of society. Further, should he delay, by stopping to make known the matter to various persons, the report might reach the ears of the priest before he himself should arrive at Jerusalem. The priests, being unfriendly to Jesus, might receive the man unwillingly, and, out of dislike to Jesus, might decline to attend to the man's case. In order to avoid such perplexity, he was directed to go without a moment's delay, and attend to the prescribed observances. There may have been other reasons for the Saviour's injunction, arising from the circumstances in which Jesus was at that time. Wisdom was exercised by our Lord in advancing his claims, both in respect to persons and to times. In Mark 1: 40—45, and Luke 5: 12—16, we find an account of this same miracle. According to Mark 1: 45, the man did not observe the command of Jesus to maintain silence in respect to his cure.

Notice, here, the leprous man *felt* himself to be in a disordered condition. He *despaired* of help from any common means. He placed *confidence in the power* of Jesus, and made application for relief. His application was *successful.* So, if we feel that we are sinners, greatly in need of pardon and holiness, and, in like manner, trust in the ability of Jesus, and apply to him with all our hearts for pardon and eternal life, we shall not apply in vain.

5. *Capernaum.* See on 4: 13. || *Centurion;* a Roman military officer, having under his command a hundred men.

6. *Lord.* See on v. 2. || *Palsy.*

7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.

9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

10 When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven:

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

See on 4 : 24. Luke (7 : 2) speaks of the servant as very near to death.

9. *Under authority;* a subordinate officer, under the authority of superior officers.

10. *Marvelled;* wondered at him, beheld him with admiration. || *So great faith;* so great confidence in me. But how had the centurion manifested any remarkable degree of confidence in the power of Jesus? In the language which he had employed. (1.) He had expressly declared, that if Jesus would only give command, the servant's sickness would leave him; and that there was no necessity for him to come to the house where the servant was. It may be interesting to compare this case with 2 Kings 4 : 30—33. (2.) His language contained a tacit contrast of Jesus with himself, greatly to the advantage of Jesus: I, only a subordinate officer, issue my orders, and they are promptly obeyed. How much more readily will thy command be obeyed, shouldst thou speak the healing word! || *In Israel;* among the people of Israel, the Jews. See on 2 : 21. It might have been expected, that the Jews, instructed in religious truth, would have a just confidence in the power of the Messiah; but that one, not a Jew, placed not in the most favorable circumstances, should express so strong confidence, was indeed remarkable.

11. *From the east and west;* from foreign countries, from all parts of the earth. || *Sit down.* The happiness of the future state of glory is likened to a company of intimate friends enjoying one another's society at an entertainment. Rev. 19 : 9. The phrase *sit down* is not strictly like the original. It was not the practice, in the time of our Saviour, for persons to sit at table, but *to recline* at their meals, to place themselves at table in *a recumbent posture;* and this is expressed by the word translated *sit down.* || *The kingdom of heaven;* the state of future glory, the consummation of the Messiah's reign. The perfection of bliss, in Jewish representation, would be to recline at an entertainment with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the distinguished fathers of the nation, in the world of glory. From the remarkable faith of this centurion, who was not a Jew, Jesus takes occasion to say that many, belonging to other nations whom the Jews regarded only as candidates for destruction, would attain to the bliss of heaven.

12. *The children of the kingdom.* The word *sons* or *children* is used in a manner somewhat peculiar in the Bible. Being united to another noun, it frequently expresses such a relation to that noun as possession, participation, desire, desert, title, &c. For instance, *children of this world*, in Luke 16 : 8, are those whose desires

13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, *so* be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the self-same hour.

14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.

15 And he touched her hand,

and portion are in this world, persons devoted to this world; *child of hell*, in Matt. 23: 15, is, a person deserving of everlasting misery; *son of peace*, in Luke 10: 6, is a person on whom it would be suitable for peace (blessings prayed for in a salutation; see on Matt. 5: 47) to come. So *children of the kingdom* are those *to whom the kingdom would seem naturally to belong*, those who, by their descent and outward circumstances, might regard themselves as candidates for the blessings of heaven. ‖ *Cast out into outer darkness*. The imagery of a feast, or entertainment, as representing the happiness of heaven, is preserved. Feasts were always held towards evening; and the apartments where they were held, were lighted up, and presented a scene of much hilarity. Such entertainments were frequently protracted to a late hour. Luke 12: 38. The night season, in the climate of Palestine, was very cold. To be thrust out, then, from the joys of the entertainment into the darkness without, is the contrast of all that is cheerful and happy; it is utter disappointment and misery. And this was a forcible method of expressing the utter misery of those who should be refused admittance into heaven; they would be consigned to the deep darkness of the world of woe. ‖ *Gnashing of teeth* expresses anguish and vexation. The figure here employed to represent the misery of those who shall not be admitted into heaven, occurs elsewhere. Matt. 22: 13. 25: 30.

Luke has given a more particular account of this transaction, in 7: 1—10. From Luke we learn, that what Matthew describes the centurion as doing, was done through the medium of the elders of the Jews. They went to Jesus, by his direction, and represented the worthy character of the centurion. Jesus commenced coming to the centurion's house in company with the Jewish elders, and, when he was at some little distance, the centurion sent other friends with a message containing the remarkable expression of his confidence in the ability of Jesus. The two accounts are essentially the same; only, in the relation of circumstances, Luke is more particular than Matthew, and sheds light on Matthew. So we, in common conversation, often speak of a man as doing what was done by others under his direction.

Topics for Reflection. 1. Confidence in the ability of the Saviour is reasonable. The men spoken of in this chapter, had heard of what Jesus had done in other cases, and they saw sufficient reason for trusting in him. So the experience of past ages should lead us to an unwavering confidence in Jesus Christ.

2. Confidence in the Saviour is pleasing to him. In the two instances here related, the desired blessing was bestowed without delay.

3. True worth of character is always accompanied with humility. Compare Luke 7: 4, 5, with Matt. 8: 8.

4. True excellence will be acknowledged and honored by the Saviour, wherever it exists. v. 10.

5. External advantages give not a title to heaven. v. 12.

14. *Peter's house*. The event just related took place at Capernaum. It would seem, then, that Peter was resident in that place. In John 1: 44, Bethsaida, on the western shore of the sea of Galilee, a little south of Capernaum, is mentioned as "the city of Peter;" that is, probably, the place of his birth and residence at the time mentioned by John. Circum-

and the fever left her: and she arose and ministered unto them.

16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with *his* word, and healed all that were sick:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias

stances might have led him to remove his residence to Capernaum, a place equally well situated for Peter's occupation, namely, fishing. ‖ *Laid;* lying down.

15. *Ministered;* attended upon, waited upon. Compare, as parallel passages, Mark 1: 29—31. Luke 4: 38, 39.

16. *When the even was come.* In Mark 1: 21, it appears that the day on which the event just related took place was the Sabbath. A regard to the Sabbath induced the people to wait till sunset (Mark 1: 32), in order to bring the sick to Jesus. ‖ *The spirits;* evil spirits, the devils, that is, demons, just mentioned. Matthew appears to have regarded these persons as being really afflicted by evil spirits. It has been made a question, whether the sacred writers themselves believed in the reality of an influence on the bodies and minds of men by evil spirits, or whether they merely accommodated their language to the superstitious notions of the common people. But when we consider the great variety of ways in which they speak of this subject, we can hardly avoid the conclusion, that the evangelists were also of the opinion that there was a real possession, in some cases, by an evil spirit. There might have been, among the multitude, a disposition to ascribe more to evil spirits than was proper, and more than the sacred writers would themselves ascribe to them. But that there were real possessions by evil spirits, seems evidently to have been believed by the evangelists. Again, it has been made a question, whether, even if the evangelists themselves believed that certain disorders of body and mind were to be traced to the influence of evil spirits, their belief was a correct one, and ought to regulate our opinion; or whether we may regard such cases as being cases of mere derangement, or epilepsy, such as occur at the present day, and which we do not commonly ascribe to evil spirits. On this question it should be considered, that if we regard the sacred writers as mistaken here, it is not easy for us to determine the limits beyond which they were not in a mistake; so that all their accounts, especially of miraculous doings, would be liable to exception. To adopt their opinions on this point, as on others, is, to say the least, the safer and the wiser course. Before the Gospels were written, the apostles were divinely qualified to be the guides of men as to religious opinions; and therefore, if they have expressed themselves in such a way as shows they believed in the reality of a demoniacal influence, we ought to submit to their judgment. Besides, Jesus himself spoke and acted in a way that perfectly accorded with such a belief. Nor is it possible for us to disprove the reality of such possessions. Nor does it become us to affirm, that, at the present day, no cases of derangement proceed from the influence of evil spirits. It is an interesting consideration, that while our Lord was on earth, he furnished so manifest evidence of his superiority to the powers of darkness, as the Lord of the new dispensation. Matt. 12: 28.

17. See Is. 53: 4. The prophet used expressions more general in their signification than the terms which Matthew has here employed. The prophet predicted, that the promised Messiah would signally relieve the woes of men. This idea Matthew very naturally illustrated by the benevolence of our Saviour in healing the sick, and thus applied, in a partial manner, that is, to a particular class of benevolent actions, what is capable

the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare *our* sicknesses.

18 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.

21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.

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of a general application, that is, to all the benevolent operations connected with the Messiah's office, relating both to this world and to the coming world. The signal benefits which Jesus conferred on the sick and on others, were so many assurances of the power and love by which benefits, adapted to the spiritual wants of men, would be bestowed by him. The expression *that it might be fulfilled*, simply signifies that the language of the prophet received a happy accomplishment; though, as is stated above, only a partial one. Compare 1 Pet. 2: 24.

18. *The other side;* namely, of the sea of Galilee. Compare v. 28

19. *A certain scribe.* See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, III. 3. ‖*Master;* in the original, *Teacher.*

20. *The Son of man;* the Messiah, in the lowly circumstances in which he appeared on earth. See Phil. 2: 7, 8. This epithet the Saviour frequently employed, and it occurs in some places as an official title. The application of this term to the Messiah might have originated from Daniel 7: 13. The phrase "the Son of man," in Daniel, simply means, a man, one in human form. The person there spoken of was doubtless the Messiah; and he is represented as *a man*, in distinction from the various forms that had before been seen by the prophet. If this term had thus come to signify the Messiah, it was, as used by Jesus, a modest and humble way of speaking. It amounted to an official title, and yet the language had nothing, in itself, expressive of superiority or dignity. Jesus intended to test the sincerity of this scribe, by stating that he could promise nothing alluring as to this world; but that his followers must hold themselves prepared for all sorts and degrees of self-denial. The scribe probably indulged the common opinion, that the Messiah was to acquire great glory, and to distribute great rewards among his followers on earth. Compare Luke 9: 57, 58.

21. *Disciples.* This word here merely signifies those who attended on the Saviour's instructions. ‖ *First.* By comparing Luke 9: 59, we shall see that Jesus had invited this man to become his follower; that is, to give himself up to an attendance on him as a constant follower. But he requested leave to bury his father, *before* he should comply with this invitation.

22. Jesus did not assent to his request, but informed him that immediate obedience was due, and that nothing, however binding or gratifying it might appear, must be allowed to interfere with obedience to his call. *Let the dead, &c.*; let the spiritually dead, those who have no true perception of their spiritual wants and interests, and of those of their fellow-men, be employed in these acts pertaining to this world. The particular form of expression was suggested by the person's speaking of *burying.* Adapting his reply to this remark, Jesus said, Let dead ones bury the dead: I call you to other duties; go to the performance of them without delay, and others, who can be of no service in my spiritual kingdom, will bury

23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.

25 And his disciples came to *him*, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.

26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea: and there was a great calm.

27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?

28 And when he was come to the other side, into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.

29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?

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the dead. The idea clearly is, Let nothing hinder you from engaging in my service without delay. The Saviour was not unmindful of the claims of filial duty; but he wished to meet the spirit of delay and of excuse, which this man cherished, and to bring clearly to his view the fact, that he was in danger of regarding other things as more binding than his duty to the Messiah. By comparing Luke 9: 59, 60, we shall see that, after thus rebuking his spirit of procrastination, Jesus commanded him to go forth and announce the glad tidings of the Messiah's having come. Even if this man's father were at that time dead, and preparations for the funeral must be immediately made, the persons concerned in the burial would contract uncleanness for seven days. Num. 19: 11, 12. He would naturally understand the Saviour, then, as cautioning against delay. But perhaps the father was not dead, and only on account of his age or infirmities, it was expected that funeral services would ere long be required. Then the Saviour's remark was still more forcible.

23. *A ship;* the fishing-boat. Jesus had given directions for crossing the sea of Galilee. v. 18. For a similar account of the transaction recorded in 23—27, see Mark 4: 36—41. Luke 8: 22—25.

28. *The other side;* that is, of the sea of Galilee. ‖ *Country of the Gergesenes.* In Mark 5: 1, and Luke 8: 26, we read "the country of the Gadarenes." It is believed that the two places, Gergesa and Gadara, belonged to the same district, namely, the region east of the Jordan, and the part of that region along the sea. The event here related probably took place in the vicinity of the two cities; and thus, while one of the evangelists speaks of the Gergesenes, the other two speak of the Gadarenes. ‖ *Coming out of the tombs.* Tombs, among the Jews, were very spacious places; frequently they were natural caverns, or caverns dug by human labor, containing different apartments and cells for the reception of the dead.

29. *What have we to do with thee?* An expression frequently used among the Hebrews, implying either very strong disapprobation and indignation, or being a mild suggestion of impropriety, according to the circumstances of the case, and the tone of voice. Here, it expresses strong indignation. Compare 2 Sam. 16: 10. John 2: 4. ‖ *Son of God.* Compare 3: 17. ‖ *Before the time.* Compare 2 Pet. 2: 4. Jude 6. Matt. 25: 41.

30 And there was a good way off from them, a herd of many swine, feeding.

31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.

32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine; and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.

33 And they that kept them, fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.

34 And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought *him* that he would depart out of their coasts.

CHAPTER IX.

AND he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.

2 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of

32. *Perished in the waters.* This act of our Lord, while it restored to their right mind (Mark 5: 15), to health and happiness, two human beings, issued also in the destruction of a multitude of swine. This destruction, too, was permitted by our Lord. He permitted it, probably, as a vindication of the divine law. Lev. 11: 7. Whether the keepers were Jews or Gentiles, the law of God, which was the law of the land, was violated by them, and the act of our Saviour may be vindicated on the same principles, substantially, as his act of purging the temple. John 2: 14—17. Matt. 21: 12, 13.

34. *The whole city.* This language is to be understood popularly, as meaning, *great multitudes* of the people went out. ‖ *Coasts;* borders. They were filled with terror, and dreaded other judgments. They doubtless knew that many others besides those whose swine had been destroyed, were exposed to similar acts of divine visitation. The presence of Jesus would endanger their gains. Compare Acts 19: 24, &c.

A similar account is given in Mark 5: 1—20, and Luke 8: 26—39. Mark and Luke speak of only one demoniac, whose condition was exceedingly deplorable. Matthew gives the additional notice that there were two. The account given of these men cannot well be explained, without ascribing their affliction, in some respects, to the influence of evil spirits.

NOTICE, here, 1. The power of Christ. How readily he relieved these distressed men!

2. The gratitude of at least one of these men. See Mark 5: 18—20. Luke 8: 38, 39.

3. The blindness of the inhabitants to their best interests. Compare Matt. 6: 23. Jonah 2: 8.

CHAPTER IX.

1. *A ship.* The same boat, probably, in which he had crossed over to the eastern side of the sea. ‖ *His own city;* Capernaum, which he had selected as the place of his residence. See on 4: 13.

2. *Palsy.* See on 4: 24. ‖ *Seeing their faith.* The extraordinary manner in which they displayed their confidence in the ability of Jesus is minutely detailed in Mark 2: 3, 4, and Luke 5: 18, 19. ‖ *Son;* a term

good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.

3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This *man* blasphemeth.

4 And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?

5 For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?

6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

7 And he arose, and departed to his house.

8 But when the multitude saw *it*, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.

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of affectionate address. ‖ *Thy sins be forgiven thee.* The word *be* was formerly used with the same signification as the word *are*. The Saviour, though he, of course, perceived the object for which this paralytic was placed before him, yet did not immediately speak of his disorder. He doubtless perceived evidence of penitence; and the man was in distress of mind, as well as of body. He therefore first gave him assurance that his sins were pardoned.

3. *Scribes.* By comparing Luke 5: 17, it will appear that there were present Pharisees and doctors of the law, that is, scribes (see INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, III. 4.), from Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. ‖ *Blasphemeth.* This word primarily signifies *to reproach, to speak calumny;* here it has the meaning, *irreverently to arrogate to one's self what is the prerogative of God.* The scribes thus accused him of irreverence and impiety in pronouncing this man's sins forgiven.

5. *Whether;* that is, which of these two things. ‖ *Is easier.* Is more within the compass of my authority. The question implied, that the one, as well as the other, pertained to him as the Messiah. Though no other person could pretend, in respect to himself, that power to work miracles was equivalent to authority to pronounce the forgiveness of sins, yet the case was different in regard to the Messiah. He was himself essentially different from other messengers of God; and his power of working miracles was different from the power possessed by others. See Matt. 10: 1. He could empower his disciples to work miracles in his name.

6. Having thus asserted his claim to the authority of pronouncing the forgiveness of sins, he proceeded miraculously to heal the sick man, as an attestation of the propriety of his claim. *The Son of man;* the Messiah. See 8: 20. ‖ *Power on earth;* the right, the authority, even while he is on earth. ‖ *Take up thy bed.* Beds, among the Jews, were materially different from ours. Beds supported by posts were not in use; beds, or mattresses, being placed upon the floor. The poor frequently made use of skins, merely, for lying upon. We should come near to the right notion of the bed, if we thought of a mere coverlet spread on the floor. It could easily be taken up and conveyed away.

8. *Glorified;* praised God, spoke of him in grateful and adoring terms. ‖ *Unto men.* They knew not the whole character of Jesus; and as he was a man, and was not recognized by them as having also higher attributes, they would naturally speak of *men* having such authority. For the parallel account of this transaction, see Mark 2: 3—12. Luke 5: 17—26.

OBSERVE, 1. Suppliants for divine mercy often receive greater blessings than they had sought. v. 2.

2. The forgiveness of sins is a just ground of joy. v. 2.

9 And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

10 And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.

11 And when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?

12 But when Jesus heard *that*, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

13 But go ye and learn what *that* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am

3. What encouragement we have to confide in the power and mercy of the Saviour! Compare Acts 5: 31.

9. *Matthew;* the author of this Gospel. In Luke 5: 27, he is named *Levi;* and in Mark 2: 14, *Levi, son of Alpheus.* It was not unusual among the Jews for a person to have more names than one. See 10: 2, 3. ‖ *Receipt of custom;* house where taxes were paid. Matthew was a publican (10: 3), that is, tax or revenue collector (see INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, III. 5), and was in his place of business. ‖ *Follow me;* become my constant attendant, spoken with reference to his being hereafter an apostle. Matthew and Mark mention that the call was obeyed. Luke (5: 28) mentions the additional circumstance, that Matthew *left all,* that is, all other matters. Matthew had, doubtless, before this formed an acquaintance with Jesus. His obedience to the call was not performed in ignorance. This example of prompt obedience, it is scarcely necessary to add, is worthy of hearty imitation.

10. *Sat at meat;* reclined at the table, as was the custom when taking meals. The modesty of Matthew is here worthy of particular notice; for, by comparing Luke 5: 29, we learn that the entertainment at which Jesus was present, was given by Matthew himself in his own house. It was no part of Matthew's object, in his Gospel, to obtain credit for himself; he wished to preserve the remarkable instructions of his Master, occasioned by this circumstance; and if it should ever be known that Matthew himself gave the entertainment, the information must come from another quarter. Matthew's object in this entertainment, doubtless, was to give his friends an opportunity of acquaintance and conversation with Jesus, as well as to show respect to Jesus. ‖ *Sinners;* persons regarded as vicious. They seem, however, to have been seeking religious instruction.

11. *Why eateth,* &c. Jesus had associated with persons with whom the Pharisees judged it unsuitable that a religious teacher should associate. They thought rather of the dignity of a teacher, than of the usefulness of his office, and regarded Jesus as acting altogether against his professed character.

12. Jesus vindicated himself by drawing an illustration from the conduct of physicians. Their employment is, to prescribe for the sick, not for those who are in health; and they are judged to be in their proper occupation when they are attending on the sick. So Jesus, who came in behalf of sinful men, was in his proper sphere when among sinful men, endeavoring to instruct and reform them. With whom should he be, but with those who needed, and who felt they needed, his instructions? He was a physician for the soul; and souls in a state of moral disease were the proper objects of his care. *They that be whole;* they that are in health.

13. He proceeded to rebuke the unkind spirit which the scribes and Pharisees cherished, and which led them to overlook, as beneath their

not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

14 Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?

15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride-chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come when the bridegroom shall be taken from

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notice, the ignorant and vicious; and, at the same time, further vindicated his own conduct, as being a manifestation of mercy and solicitude for the welfare of the wretched. For this purpose, he referred to what is written in Hosea 6: 6, as showing that God has more pleasure in a merciful temper manifested by men, than in a scrupulous regard to external performances. *I will have mercy;* not, I will exercise mercy, but *I choose mercy.* ‖ *And not sacrifice.* This is spoken comparatively. I choose mercy rather than sacrifices; I prefer a merciful spirit to sacrifices. Under the old dispensation, sacrifices were appointed, and were therefore a part of obedience, and as such were acceptable to God; but the external offering of sacrifices, in itself considered, was of no regard, when compared with a merciful disposition. ‖ *The righteous.* The idea of the Saviour would here be more readily apprehended, if the word *the* were omitted. I am not come to call righteous beings, but sinful beings. The Saviour's mission was in behalf of sinners, not in behalf of righteous beings, who need not repentance nor redemption. Consequently, sinful beings are the very ones with whom he should associate, in order to do them good, and to accomplish the design of his mission. He thus took the Pharisees on their own ground. They objected, that he associated with sinners. He replied, It was in behalf of sinners that I came. For corresponding passages, see Mark 2: 15—17. Luke 5: 30—32. The Pharisees regarded themselves (see Luke 18: 11, 12) as righteous; if they, then, as being righteous in their own esteem, felt not that they needed repentance, and could obtain no benefit from the Saviour, they surely ought not to find fault with him for helping those who manifestly needed his aid.

14. *The disciples of John;* that is, John the Baptist, who was at this time, probably, in prison. See Luke 3: 19, 20. According to Luke 5: 33, the persons who came to our Lord with the question in this verse, were the same as those with whom he had just been conversing; from Mark 2: 18, we should gather, that these persons and some of John's disciples proposed the question. Such was, doubtless, the fact; and thus Matthew and Luke are easily reconciled. ‖ *Fast oft.* Frequent fastings were enjoined, both public and private, by the Pharisees. See Luke 18: 12. It is probable that John's disciples also imitated this practice; and at the time here spoken of, they felt themselves in much affliction on account of the imprisonment of their master, and, doubtless, fasted with reference to that affliction. The disciples of Jesus, it was perceived, did not practise such observances. This being so different from what was accounted a very necessary part of piety, a question respecting it was proposed to Jesus.

15. Jesus replied to this inquiry by presenting three illustrations, which would show the unsuitableness, to his disciples, of fasting at the present time. *Bride-chamber;* the chamber where the nuptial bed was. ‖ *Children of the bride-chamber;* the word *children* is here used in a manner similar to that in which it is used in 8: 12; that is, as indicating some particular relation. In the present instance, the phrase means, those who were particularly occupied in reference to a wedding, as the friends of the bridegroom and the bride. They corresponded, somewhat, to those who,

them, and then shall they fast.

16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment; for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.

17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles; else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.

18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.

19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and *so did* his disciples.

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at modern weddings, attend upon the person to be married, and are sometimes called *bridemen;* only their services were far more extensive. Among other matters, they accompanied the bridegroom when he went to bring home the bride, in order to celebrate the nuptials. The question, then, of the Saviour, amounts to this, —Can you expect there will be mourning on a nuptial occasion? Would mourning be congruous at a wedding? || *The bridegroom shall be taken from them.* Jesus had compared himself to a bridegroom, and his disciples to the friends of the bridegroom. Continuing the language of the illustration, instead of adopting plain language, he said, the bridegroom, that is, himself, would be removed; and then, through sorrow of heart, in their changed circumstances, the friends of the bridegroom, his disciples, would fast.

16. The same idea, namely, the unsuitableness of fasting to his disciples, is expressed by another illustration. *New cloth.* The word *new* here signifies *not fulled*, not having been finished by the fuller. Cloth not fulled would be unsuitable to patch a garment with. || *That which is put in to fill it up;* the patch. || *Taketh from the garment.* Cloth not fulled will shrink, and, consequently, if patched into an old garment, will tear it. There is an unfitness between a garment which has been worn, and cloth not yet fulled; they cannot be used together. So in the case of his disciples. Such were their circumstances, that fasting, which was a sign of sorrow, would be unsuitable.

17. By a third illustration, he enforced the same idea. *New wine;* wine not yet fermented. || *Old bottles.* Bottles were anciently made of the skins of animals. || *The bottles break.* Being made of skins, they would, when they were old, become dry, and incapable of swelling as the new wine would ferment. They would then burst, and both the wine would be lost, and the leather bottles be ruined. But unfermented wine must be put into fresh skin bottles; so that the bottles may swell as the wine ferments. As there was this unsuitableness between new wine and old bottles, so was there an unsuitableness between the circumstances of the disciples and fasting. Compare the parallel passages in Luke 5: 33—39. Mark 2: 18—22. Luke records an additional remark (5: 39), which is of the same import as those we have considered.

18. *A certain ruler.* From Mark 5: 22, and Luke 8: 41, we learn that his name was Jairus; and that he was a ruler of the synagogue. This officer was a person who presided over the assembly, and who not only kept order, but also invited readers and speakers. See Acts 13: 15. *Worshipped;* paid special respect. Compare Mark 5: 22, and Luke 8: 41 || *Is even now dead;* is just at the point of death. Compare Mark 5: 23, 35, and Luke 8: 49. She was so low when Jairus left the house, that he might speak of her as *just gone.*

20 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind *him*, and touched the hem of his garment:

21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.

22 But Jesus turned him about; and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.

23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,

24 He said unto them, Give place; for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.

25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.

26 And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.

27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on us.

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20. While on the way to the ruler's house, another interesting event occurred. *Hem of his garment.* The garment was the mantle; and around the borders of this, the Mosaic law required that there should be fringes. Num. 15: 38. The fringes are meant by the word *hem.*

21. *I shall be whole;* I shall be healed.

22. *Daughter;* a term of kind address, like the word *son* in the second verse. ‖ *Thy faith;* thy confidence in my power and benevolence. Mark 5: 24—34, and Luke 8: 43—48, give a very particular and interesting account of this case.

We may NOTICE here how acceptable to the Saviour was the manifestation of affectionate reliance on him. So, in regard to our being pardoned and saved, if we feel we are guilty and unworthy, and give up ourselves to him, he will accept us.

23. *Ruler;* the same as is mentioned in verse 18. ‖ *Minstrels;* musicians. The occurrence of death in a family, in the East, was attended with many outward manifestations of sorrow. The females, for several days successively, indulged in loud cries of distress. Persons also attended at the house for the purpose of chanting, in mournful strains, the excellences of the deceased. There were also employed, on such occasions, professed musicians and singers. It is in reference to such a custom, that Jeremiah speaks, 9: 17—21; and Amos, 5: 16. ‖ *Making a noise.* Reference is had here to the tumultuous expressions of grief made by the relatives and friends of the family, as was customary. Compare Mark 5: 38, and Luke 8: 52.

24. *Is not dead, but sleepeth.* The Saviour meant to convey the idea, that her death was peculiarly only a sleep, as he was about to restore her to life. It was customary to express the idea of death by the term *sleep.* See John 11: 11, 13. 1 Thess. 4: 13. Dan. 12: 2. The present instance of death might well be called *sleeping.* The people, however, knew that the child was really dead. See Luke 8: 53. ‖ *Laughed him to scorn;* derided him, laughed at him in a scornful manner.

25. *He went in;* that is, to the room where the corpse was. Mark relates (5: 40), that he took with him the father and the mother of the child, and them that were with him; namely, the three disciples, Peter, James, and John. See Mark 5: 37. Compare, as parallel passages, Mark 5: 38—43. Luke 8: 49—56.

26. *Fame;* report. ‖ *All that land;* all that region of the country.

27. *Son of David;* another term for *Messiah.* The Messiah was to be

28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.

29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith, be it unto you.

30 And their eyes were opened: and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See *that* no man know *it*.

31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.

32 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.

33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.

34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.

36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad as sheep having no shepherd.

37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly *is* plenteous, but the laborers *are* few:

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a descendant of David. See Matt. 22: 42. 12: 23.

29. *According to your faith;* your confidence in me.

30. *Straitly;* strictly. The reason why Jesus charged them not to make known what he had done, might have been to prevent unseasonable excitement in respect to himself. He had performed several miracles that day; and the people might easily be induced to take rash measures in seeking honor for him, and demanding for him some great dignity. They had very erroneous notions respecting the nature of his office; and regarding him rather in the light of one who was to establish a great temporal dominion, their feelings, at times, bore too much resemblance to those of the populace in certain countries, when they fill the air with shouts of "Long live the king." Compare John 6: 15.

33. *In Israel.* See on 8: 10.

34. *The prince of the devils;* Satan, Beelzebub. See Matt. 12: 24. 25: 41.

35. Compare with 4: 23.

36. By the expressive image of sheep without a shepherd, Jesus represented the moral and religious condition of the Jewish people in his time. How wearied, and roving hither and thither without obtaining satisfaction, and how uncomfortable in every respect, would such sheep be, especially in Oriental countries, where the flocks occupied so much the care and attention of their owners! So the Jewish people had no suitable religious teachers, none to care sincerely for them, and to lead them in the right way. Multitudes of them were disheartened, dispirited wanderers. *Fainted;* were exhausted, in a state of distress. ‖ *Scattered abroad;* not properly gathered together under suitable spiritual guides. They did not present the appearance of a carefully attended to and well taught community. For a similar description of the people's state, see Matt. 11: 28. For an intimation respecting the unsuitable character of their religious teachers, see Luke 11: 46. Matt. 23: 3, 4.

37. *The harvest truly is plenteous;* there are multitudes needing instruc-

38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.

CHAPTER X.

AND when he had called unto *him* his twelve disciples, he gave them power *against* unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.

2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James *the son* of Zebedee,

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tion, and ready to receive it. ‖ *Laborers;* suitable teachers of divine truth.

38. *The Lord of the harvest;* God, whose is the world and the fulness thereof. The language of these two verses occurs in Luke 10: 2, in connection with our Lord's sending out the seventy evangelists. The same thought was doubtless more than once expressed.

REMARKS. 1. The importance of confidence in the power and love of Christ, is strikingly exhibited in this chapter. vs. 2, 22, 28, 29.

2. The instructions and miracles of Jesus were convincing, except to those who were unwilling to be convinced. Their determined opposition led them to refer his works to any power rather than the true one. v. 34.

3. Jesus was full of mercy. v. 36.

4. Ministers ought to be *laborers*, like their Master. John 4: 34.

5. We must look to God for an increase of Christian teachers. v. 38.

6. The religion of the gospel is a spiritual religion. It imposes no outward ceremonies incongruous with times and circumstances. vs. 14—17.

CHAPTER X.

1. *His twelve disciples.* These had been selected before, and had enjoyed the benefit of much intimacy with their Lord, and much instruction from him. See Mark 3: 14. By reference to Luke 6: 12—17, it appears that he selected his twelve disciples, or rather completed the selection, on the morning of the day when he delivered the sermon on the mount, and after having spent the night in prayer to God. There are in that discourse, as has been already intimated, several parts more adapted to the apostles than to the multitude. Matthew, being now about to relate the instructions, or the charge, of Jesus to the twelve, merely hints that twelve had been selected, whom Jesus was now specially commissioning. ‖ *Unclean spirits — to cast them out.* We should not expect such an expression, on such an occasion and in such a connection as this, unless evil spirits had in reality exerted a malign influence in some cases of affliction.

2. *Apostles.* This term is appropriated to the twelve here mentioned. In its primary meaning, it signifies *persons sent forth.* It is like our word *missionaries.* ‖ *The first;* not in dignity, as having preëminence over the others. See Luke 22: 24—26. Matt. 23: 8—12. According to Matt. 4: 18, 21, it appears that Peter and Andrew, James and John, were called the earliest to attend constantly on the Saviour, with reference to becoming his public servants. It was natural, then, that in a list of the apostles' names, these should be mentioned first. ‖ *Peter.* See on John 1: 42. ‖ *James.* In the next verse is mentioned another *James, son of Alpheus.* These are sometimes distinguished by the latter's being called *James the Less*, he being younger than the other. The death of James the Greater, the brother of John, is mentioned in Acts 12: 2. The other James is probably the author of the Epistle bearing his name, and is mentioned also in Gal. 1: 19. 2: 9. Acts 15: 13. 12: 17. Matt. 13: 55.

and John his brother;

3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James *the son* of Alpheus, and Lebbeus, whose surname was Thaddeus;

4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into *any* city of the Samaritans enter ye not:

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3. *Bartholomew;* supposed to be the same as Nathanael. He may have had the two names, Nathanael and Bartholomew, that is, according to the derivation of the word, *son of Tolmai*. Compare John 1 : 46. 21 : 2. In this last passage, Nathanael seems to be included among the twelve disciples. ‖ *Thomas;* also called *Didymus*. See John 21 : 2. The name *Didymus*, in Greek, signifies *twin*, as does the name *Thomas*, in the language most commonly spoken by our Lord and his apostles. ‖ *Matthew the publican*. Compare 9 : 9. ‖ *Lebbeus*. Besides being also named *Thaddeus*, he is called by Luke (6 : 16), *Judas*.

4. *The Canaanite*. This word would be more correctly spelled *Cananite*. It does not signify an inhabitant of Canaan. Luke (6 : 15. Acts 1 : 13) calls this person *Simon Zelotes*. The word *Zelotes* enables us to understand the word which Matthew has employed. The two words are of the same signification; the one used by Luke being a Greek word, the other a Hebrew or Chaldaic word, expressed in Greek letters. In the age of Christ and the apostles, there was an extensive association of private individuals, who undertook to maintain the purity of the national religion by inflicting punishment, without the form of trial, on all who should violate the institutions which they held sacred. They declared themselves impelled by a more than human zeal. The example of Phinehas, perhaps, confirmed them in their purposes. Num. 25 : 6—15. The word *Zelotes* (zealot) designates a member of this association; and Simon was probably once connected with it. Now, the word *Cananite*, traced to its Hebrew origin, also signifies *a zealot*. ‖ *Judas Iscariot*. The word *Iscariot* is believed to be a Greek expression of two Hebrew words, which signify *Man of Kerioth*. In Joshua 15 : 25, mention is made of a town of this name. ‖ *Betrayed him*. See Matt. 26 : 14—16, 25, 46—50.

For a similar list of the apostles' names, see Mark 3 : 16—19, and Luke 6 : 14—16. The lists agree, except that Luke calls the one *Judas*, who is named by the others *Lebbeus* or *Thaddeus*. Doubtless, these several names belonged to the same individual; such a practice being usual among the Jews. It is observable, that Matthew has mentioned these names in couples. If we examine Mark 6 : 7, we shall see that Jesus sent them forth "by two and two;" probably in the same manner as Matthew has recorded their names.

5. By a comparison of the Saviour's instructions to the disciples, as recorded by Matthew, with the record which Mark (6 : 8—11) and Luke (9 : 3—5) have made, it will be seen that Matthew's account is much more full. Mark and Luke appear to have preserved scarcely any thing more than what related to the mission immediately to be performed; while the instructions recorded by Matthew are more extensive, and were applicable to the whole course of their apostleship. *The Gentiles;* other people than the Jews. ‖ *Samaritans*. The central part of Palestine, called *Samaria*, was inhabited by the Samaritans. They were not properly Jews, though they sustained a peculiar relation to the Jews. After the death of Solomon, the kingdom of the Hebrews was divided into two parts; ten tribes forming the kingdom of

6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.

8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.

9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass, in your purses,

10 Nor scrip for *your* journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the

Israel, under Jeroboam, and the two tribes, Judah and Benjamin, forming the kingdom of Judah, under Rehoboam. When the kingdom of Israel was subdued by the Assyrians, the greater part of the people were carried away into different provinces of the Assyrian empire, and a mixed collection of people were introduced into the country of Israel. These united with the remnant of the former inhabitants; and thus the community of Samaritans was formed. Various circumstances conspired to excite hostility between the Jews and the Samaritans; and in the time of our Saviour there was no friendly intercourse between them. See John 4: 9. Though our Lord, as appears by the 4th chapter of John, was kindly received among some of them on a certain occasion, yet as they were not, properly speaking, Jews, the time had not yet come to spread among them the new religion. It was to the Jews this new dispensation primarily belonged; as to them it had for so long been an object of promise.

6. *House of Israel;* the Jews. 2: 20. ‖ *Lost sheep.* Compare 9: 36.

7. *Preach;* proclaim; announce. ‖ *Kingdom of heaven.* Compare 3: 2.

8. *Lepers.* See 8: 2. ‖ *Cast out devils.* v. 1; also 8: 16. ‖ *Freely;* gratuitously, without pay. You received not your miraculous power by purchase; make it not a means of gain. Benevolently, gratuitously, impart to others, since you have gratuitously received.

9, 10. They were directed to indulge no anxiety as to their subsistence and protection, and to consume no time in making preparations for their journey. *Gold,—silver,—brass;* that is, money. ‖ *Scrip;* travelling-bag for carrying provisions. Travellers, among the Jews, carried provisions with them. Their inns were not, like ours, provided with needful food for companies of people. ‖ *Two coats.* The principal articles of ordinary dress were a coat, or tunic, which was the inside garment; and a mantle, or robe. Such, doubtless, were the chief articles of dress which the apostles had on, when Jesus was addressing them; he told them not to be solicitous about having more clothing, not to occupy their time in making preparation for their journey, nor to encumber themselves with wearing-apparel, which might be needless, or which might be inappropriate to their circumstances. Sometimes, two tunics were worn; the outer one, a more costly article than the inner. But to provide themselves with a second tunic, would consume time, and might make an impression of their belonging to a class of society in which they had not been accustomed to move. Thus, though they were going on a journey among comparative strangers, they were to go habited as they then were, and as they ordinarily were. Had their appearance been materially different, and had they gone on their mission with any uncommon outward preparation, with any thing adapted to attract attention, an erroneous impression might have been made concerning the character of their office, and the erroneous impression already existing concerning the Messiah might have been deepened. But such a course was pursued as would best prepare the people to learn that the Messiah's work had respect to the heart and to the eternal world. ‖ *Neither shoes;* that is, no other shoes than what you have on. The instructions, as given by Mark, say (6: 9), *Be shod with*

workman is worthy of his meat.

11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, inquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.

12 And when ye come into a house, salute it.

13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon

sandals. Take the sandals, or shoes, you have on; care not to provide another pair. There was probably no difference, in meaning, between the word which is translated *shoes*, and that which is translated *sandals*. If there was a difference, as some have maintained, and the *shoes* were a more costly article than the *sandals*, then there was an additional reason for prohibiting the *shoes*, on account of the moderate circumstances of the apostles and of their Master, and in order to prevent an erroneous impression by any approach to splendid appearance. ‖ *Nor yet staves;* that is, no other staves than what you now have. Mark (6: 8) mentions that one *staff* was permitted. Luke (9: 3) mentions the *staff* as not to be taken. The circumstances of the case show how the sacred writers, on this occasion, are to be understood. For in Mark (6: 8), and Luke (9: 3), a general direction is given, that the apostles "should take nothing for their journey;" that is, they should make no special preparation for their journey; they should not furnish themselves with any additional articles of wearing-apparel; but such as they had at the time, they might take. If they had a covering for the feet, they might wear it; but if not, they were not to spend time in procuring shoes; if any one of them had a staff, or if each had a staff, he might take it; but those that had none, let them go without. The various particulars mentioned, then, are merely the filling up of the general expression, Make no preparations for your journey, but go just as you are. ‖ *Worthy of his meat;* that is, of his sustenance. Thus the Saviour led his apostles to an entire trust in the providence of God, and gave them an intimation that they would meet, in many instances, with a kind reception, and that by those who should welcome them, as the Messiah's heralds, their wants would be freely supplied. There was no need of their embarrassing themselves with a variety of articles, as they might on an ordinary journey. They were going forth as messengers of the Messiah; they might trust in God, that all their wants would be supplied, and no time need be occupied, and no perplexity endured, and no expense incurred, in preparing for their mission.

11. *Worthy;* deserving of your confidence, pious, well-disposed. Compare Luke 7: 4, 5. Acts 10: 1, 2. ‖ *There abide;* that is, in the house of such a person, partaking of his hospitality. ‖ *Thence;* out of the city or town. On a similar occasion, namely, when Jesus was sending forth the seventy disciples, he said (Luke 10: 7), *Go not from house to house.* To abide in the same house, and share the hospitalities of the same person, would show contentment and gratitude, and would more comport with the object for which they were sent, than to be perpetually changing their place of temporary abode.

12. *House.* This word is here to be taken as equivalent to *family*, or as containing the additional idea of *the family* which dwelt in the house. ‖ *Salute it;* that is, the family. Among the Jews, the expressions used at salutation and at parting, were of a more serious character than those which prevail among us. They implied that the person who employed them prayed for a blessing on the other. See on 5: 47. Compare Judges 19: 20. Ruth 2: 4. Ps. 129: 8.

13. *The house;* the family. ‖ *Worthy;* of suitable character to receive the blessings implied in your salutation, well-disposed, and ready to welcome your message. ‖ *Your peace,* the blessings invoked in your saluta-

it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.

14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.

15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;

18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.

19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or

tion. The form of salutation most usual was, Peace be to thee. ‖ *Let your peace come;* a familiar way of expressing, It shall come; that is, The blessing you have invoked shall rest upon that family. The same thought is expressed in the future tense, in Luke 10: 6. ‖ *Let your peace return to you;* the blessing you have invoked shall not rest upon the family; your good wishes will not be accomplished, but will return to yourselves void, so far as that family is concerned.

14. *Shake off the dust of your feet;* as an expression of disapprobation, and of having no fellowship with persons thus disposed. The Jews felt themselves defiled by the very dust of a heathen city, while their own soil they regarded as holy. As a Jew, then, would express his separation from Gentiles, and his disapprobation of their wickedness, by shaking off the dust which he might have contracted, so the apostles were to express their separation, in feelings and conduct, from those who refused to give a welcome reception to their message. Mark (6: 11) adds the expression, "for a testimony against them;" that is, Thus you will bear testimony to the criminality of their conduct. For a specimen of complying with this direction, see Acts 13: 50, 51. A similar instance also occurs in Acts 18: 6.

15. *Sodom and Gomorrah.* See Gen. 13: 13. 18: 20, 21, 32. 19: 24, 25.

16. While some would give the apostles a welcome reception, others, and those not a few, would cherish towards them feelings of malignity.

17. *The councils;* that is, tribunals, courts of justice. Some will accuse you and arraign you for trial. ‖ *Scourge you in their synagogues.* The punishment of scourging was allowed by the laws of Moses, and the number of stripes was not to exceed forty. See Deut. 25: 2, 3. The more recent Jews, in order to be sure of not exceeding this number, fixed the limit at thirty-nine. 2 Cor. 11: 24. This punishment was inflicted in the synagogues. See Matt. 23: 34. Acts 22: 19. 26: 11.

18. *Governors;* the Roman rulers of the provinces; such as Pilate (Matt. 27: 2); Felix and Festus (Acts 23: 24. 24: 27). ‖ *Kings;* either such as the Roman emperors (Acts 25: 10—12), or the dependent and merely nominal kings, that is, tetrarchs, in Palestine (Acts 12: 1. 25: 24, 26). ‖ *Against them and the Gentiles;* or, as the passage might be rendered, *to them and the Gentiles.* By being arraigned, an opportunity would be afforded for publicly defending the Messiah's cause, and making widely known among the Gentiles the principles of the new religion. Such, for instance, was the case with Paul, as related in Acts 17: 19—34. Compare, also, Phil. 1: 12, 13.

19. *Take no thought;* be not solicitous.

what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.

20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.

21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against *their* parents, and cause them to be put to death.

22 And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.

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21. In these trying circumstances, their nearest connections would even become hostile to them on account of their persevering attachment to the Messiah. *Rise up;* as witnesses and opponents.

22. *Hated of all men;* very generally disregarded and abused. In these circumstances, how important that they should keep in view *the end;* the end of their sufferings and the end of life, and the reward to which their labors and sufferings were tending, if they adhered faithfully to their Master! In many instances, their sufferings would end only with their lives. A perseverance through all sufferings, even till death, would be necessary. ‖ *Saved;* from the displeasure of God and from condemnation. In the trying circumstances in which the apostles would be placed, the temptation to apostasy might sometimes be very strong; but they were to keep in view the bright prospects of another life, and to be sustained by the hope of salvation.

23. *Flee ye into another.* Contend not with persecutors, nor unreasonably urge your claims on those who oppose. Waste no time in fruitless endeavors to get an advantage over them, but pass away to another city. ‖ *Have gone over;* that is, in order to instruct the people and maintain the cause of your Master. A mere passing through the cities would not be sufficient; but time must be occupied in making known and explaining the object of the Messiah. And when once repulsed from a city, they ought not entirely to abandon the design of making known the gospel there, but to return at a favorable time. Thus they were to go over the cities; and they would have too much occasion to flee from city to city. ‖ *Till the Son of man be come.* There is some difficulty in deciding the precise meaning of this expression, as here used. But as the instructions in the context refer to a period subsequent to the death of Jesus, rather than to the immediate mission before the apostles, it is most probable that the Saviour refers to his coming, by divine providence, for the destruction of Jerusalem and the dissolution of the Jewish state. This great event took place between thirty and forty years after the time when these instructions were delivered. The Roman army besieged and took Jerusalem, and the Jews, as a nation, lost their existence. To this event a similar expression refers in other places. Matt. 16: 28. Mark 9: 1. Luke 9: 27. The Saviour, then, was cautioning his disciples to lose no time in prosecuting their mission. In fact, they had no time to lose; soon the Son of man was to come for the destruction of the nation; and before this event should occur, the tidings of the Messiah, and the urging of the claims of Jesus, and the explanation of his objects, were to be distinctly communicated to the nation. And there was not too much time for accomplishing these things, before he would come in judgment upon the nation. The territory, though small, was filled with cities and villages;

24 The disciple is not above *his* master, nor the servant above his lord.

25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* them of his household?

26 Fear them not, therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.

27 What I tell you in darkness, *that* speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, *that* preach ye upon the housetops.

28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

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from some they would be repelled, and they must go back again at a favorable opportunity. In all they must spend some time. And to gain a lodgment for the gospel would not be a short work.

24. Jesus proceeded to caution them against any vain expectations that might arise as to their message being universally received, and respect being universally paid to them. *The disciple is not above his master.* They knew how their Master had often been treated, and they must not calculate upon better treatment.

25. *Beelzebub.* This was originally the name of a heathen god, worshipped in Ekron among the Philistines (see 2 Kings 1: 2), which was afterwards ascribed by the Jews, on account of their abhorrence of idolatry, to Satan. See Luke 11: 15. It meant, originally, *Lord of flies*, as it was esteemed the office of this deity to protect his worshippers from the gnats and flies with which their region abounded. The word was sometimes written *Beelzebul;* the original meaning of which latter word was, either *Lord of the dwelling*, that is, of evil spirits; or *Lord of the dunghill.* In the mouth of a Jew, it was a most opprobrious epithet.

26. *Fear them not.* However much they might be abused and maligned, they ought not to be disheartened, nor induced to retire from their work. ‖ *For there is nothing covered, &c.* This seems to have been a proverbial saying, the purport of which was, Truth will not always be covered up; it will be displayed, and its claims and honors vindicated. The time is coming, when the truth respecting my object, and respecting your character and teaching as my apostles, will be brought to light, and justice will be done both to my cause and to you. Though you may now be assailed with most opprobrious epithets, yet desist not from your purpose, for, by and by, the hidden truth respecting my religion will be gloriously made known. The encouragement thus furnished related both to the gradual development of the excellence of Christianity, as it has been unfolding itself in successive ages, and to the disclosures which will be made in connection with the day of judgment. See 1 Cor. 4: 5.

27. Hence the apostles were publicly to proclaim what Jesus had taught them *in private. Preach ye;* proclaim. ‖ *House-tops.* The roofs of houses in the East were not fashioned like ours, but were nearly flat, were surrounded with a balustrade, and were often resorted to on public occasions. *To proclaim on the housetop*, then, would mean *to proclaim openly.*

28—31. The apostles were cautioned in general not to indulge the fear of man, but to let a salutary fear of God's displeasure, and a confidence in his care, dwell in them. ‖ *A farthing.* The word thus translated

29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.

30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

31 Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows.

32 Whosoever, therefore, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

36 And a man's foes *shall be* they of his own household.

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not

was the name of a brass coin equal to a cent and a half of our money. ‖ *Without your Father;* without his knowledge or will.

32, 33. Having thus inculcated the fear of God, and affectionate confidence in his care, Jesus next pointed out the result of a firm adherence to his cause on the one hand, and of renouncing him on the other; thus, by various arguments, strengthening the purposes of his apostles against the dangers and allurements which would beset them. *Confess me;* acknowledge me in the character which I claim, as the Messiah. ‖ *Him will I confess also;* him will I acknowledge in the character which he professes, as a follower of the Messiah.

33. *Deny me;* refuse to acknowledge me as the Messiah. ‖ *Will I also deny;* refuse to acknowledge as my follower.

34. The Saviour wished to prepare his apostles for all the circumstances which would attend them as his heralds. They must, then, not be disappointed if commotion should be excited by the proclaiming of his doctrines, and if those who might be supposed to cherish hearty union with one another should rather be at variance. *Come to send peace.* The Saviour was not here speaking of the *design* for which he came, but only of some *results* that would attend the prosecution of his design. We often speak in the same manner: A missionary, we say, went to such a place *to die.* ‖ *A sword;* an emblem of contention. ‖ *I came not to send peace, but a sword;* as a result of my coming, and occasioned by my coming, there will be contention. Those who refuse to receive my doctrine will cherish unfriendly feelings towards those who do receive it. How often has this been the case even in Christian lands! In families where harmony reigned, but where religion was not possessed by any member, it has often happened, when a parent or a child has become religious, the other members of the family have felt as if a separation had taken place, and they have permitted unfriendly feelings to predominate. This, however, is not the design, nor the direct tendency of religion. It is rather a manifestation of the improper feelings of impenitent persons towards religion, or towards those who possess it. Such consequences are not to be ascribed to religion, but to sin.

35, 36. These verses contain the same idea as the preceding, more particularly detailed.

37. Since, now, there would be this commotion in families, and some members of families might come to cherish hostility towards other members, who should receive the teaching of the apostles, it was necessary to know and to teach, that a supreme

worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life, shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake, shall find it.

40 He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward.

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love to their Master was required — a love which would be superior to any earthly attachment. He was to be loved more than one's father, or mother, or son, or daughter. *Worthy of me;* fit to be a follower of me. Compare Luke 14. 26, 27. Matt. 19: 29.

38. *Taketh his cross.* The cross was an instrument of most ignominious and painful death. A person condemned to the cross was also compelled to carry the cross on which he was to be crucified, through the streets, to the place of execution. The idea of the Saviour, then, is this: He that is not prepared to endure the greatest ignominy and suffering which may be connected with following me; he that is not prepared even to die in a most ignominious and painful manner, rather than renounce me, — is not in a fit condition to be my disciple. Such was the spirit which Jesus himself manifested in regard to his great work. His example was to be followed. A person not disposed to follow this example could not be his disciple.

39. *Findeth his life;* preserveth, saveth his life, by renouncing me. ‖ *Shall lose it;* shall lose it in the highest sense, that is, for eternity; shall lose his soul. The word here translated *life* has also the meaning of *soul;* and it is here used with reference to its twofold signification. If a man saves his life on earth by yielding to the temptations which may urge him to renounce the Messiah, he yet will lose it in eternity; that is, he will lose his soul. ‖ *Loseth his life;* that is, on earth. ‖ *Shall find it;* shall save it in eternity; that is, shall save his soul. The preserving of life by renouncing the Messiah, would be followed by the loss of the soul; the losing of life in consequence of adherence to him, would be followed by the salvation of the soul.

40. After hearing of the distresses for which they must hold themselves prepared, it would be consoling to know, that by some, they and their teaching would be kindly received; and that those who gave them a welcome reception would be acknowledged as receiving the Messiah, and receiving God, who sent him.

41. *A prophet;* a divinely-authorized religious teacher. ‖ *In the name of a prophet;* as a prophet. ‖ *A prophet's reward;* a corresponding reward; a distinguished reward, answering to the assistance he had thus furnished to the Lord's ambassador in fulfilling his office. ‖ *In the name of a righteous man;* as a righteous, pious man. ‖ *Righteous man's reward;* a corresponding reward, an ample recompense, suitable for deeds which were helpful to pious men, and which were performed on account of their pious character and engagements. A difference is intimated between the reward for receiving a religious teacher [a prophet], and the reward for receiving a righteous man of private life. The reason, doubtless, is, because a teacher was a more important person, and receiving a teacher in a hospitable manner, while the spirit of persecution was cherished abroad, might expose a person to greater difficulty than receiving

42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold *water* only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.

CHAPTER XI.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence, to teach and to preach in their cities.

2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,

3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?

4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see:

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a pious man who was in private life; just as, during a war, and in dangerous circumstances, to receive and assist an officer of the army would entitle a person to a greater reward than to receive and assist a mere private soldier.

42. *These little ones;* disciples, as appears from the following expression, *in the name of a disciple.* Teachers among the Jews were called *Rabbi*, or *Rab;* the radical meaning of which word is *great.* As the teacher was thus called *great*, his scholars, or disciples, standing in a contrasted relation to him, were called *small*, or *little ones.* Thus this phrase, *little ones*, came to be synonymous with the word *disciples*, whether the teacher claimed or did not claim the title *Rabbi.* Jesus was not unfrequently addressed with this title, though he never claimed it. The principle on which such acts of kindness towards the Saviour's apostles and followers would be followed with an ample recompense, is clearly exhibited in Matt. 25: 40.

TOPICS FOR REFLECTION, suggested by this chapter.

1. How great the guilt and the danger of neglecting the gospel! v. 15.

2. Over how great opposition has Christianity triumphed! vs. 16—25, 34—36.

3. While we are in the path of duty, we may cheerfully resign ourselves and the vindication of our character to God. v. 26.

4. God is to be regarded rather than men. v. 28. Compare Acts 4: 19. 5: 29.

5. There will be a rich recompense for serving Christ. v. 32.

6. Christ ought to be loved and obeyed rather than the nearest earthly relatives. vs. 37, 38.

7. How kind a notice will be taken of attentions paid to the Saviour's followers! vs. 40—42.

CHAPTER XI.

1. *Their cities;* cities of the people of that region. The apostles, also, in obedience to the instructions, went forth. See Mark 6: 12. Luke 9: 6. These same evangelists also mention the return of the twelve from their mission. Mark 6: 30, 31. Luke 9: 10.

2. *John;* the Baptist. ‖ *In the prison.* In the 14th chapter, Matthew relates the circumstance of John's having been thrown into prison. The prison is said to have been in the town of Machaerus, in the south-part of Perea, the region east of the Jordan.

3. *He that should come;* that is, the Messiah, so called, as having been so long predicted and so ardently desired. John 11: 27. ‖ *Another;* another person as the Messiah.

4. *Ye do hear and see.* From Luke (7: 21) we learn that at this very time, Jesus was performing miraculous deeds. To what they thus saw, and to what they heard others relate

5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.

6 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

concerning him, Jesus referred them for an answer to their inquiry.

5. *The poor;* those who are in lowly and afflicted circumstances. There is also connected with this meaning of the word the idea of meekness and humility, as these traits of character seem to comport more with such outward circumstances than with wealth and distinction. Allusion is here had to Isa. 61 : 1, where the word *meek* is used, substantially the same in the original as the word *poor*. ‖ *Have the gospel preached to them.* The word *gospel* signifies *good tidings;* and the idea here is, that the lowly and distressed have been kindly regarded, and are favored with the announcement of promised blessings. Compare Is. 61: 1. Not only was this in accordance with prophecy respecting the Messiah, but it also constituted a striking difference between Jesus and all the teachers of his day. They thought mostly of the privileges and dignities pertaining to their office, while the immortal beings for whose welfare they ought to have been anxious, were neglected. They sought popularity and the favor of the rich. On the contrary, Jesus, as it was predicted of the Messiah, was not seeking his own glory, but was conferring real and needed blessings on others, and was especially mindful of the poor and humble who felt their need of spiritual mercies.

6. *Offended.* The word *offend* in the Bible has a different signification from that which it bears in ordinary conversation. See on Matt. 5 : 29. It here means *led*, or *induced*, *to commit sin.* ‖ *In me;* in respect to me. So different was Jesus from the ordinary expectations of the people respecting the Messiah, and so different was much of his conduct from the expectations of his real friends, that they might be in danger of suspecting they had indulged in mistake concerning his being the Messiah, and thus be exposed to the temptation of renouncing him in a sinful manner. Blessed is he (said the Saviour) who endures steadfastly in his attachment to me as the Messiah, however different my appearance and my movements may be from what he had anticipated. Look at my works, as the evidence of my being the Messiah.

Observe: The character and works of Jesus are substantial proofs of his being the Messiah, the Saviour of the world.

But why should John send such a message to Jesus? By examining John 3: 25, 26, and Matt. 9 : 14, it would seem that some of John's disciples were still attached to him in a way which implied not a perfectly right view of the relation which Jesus sustained to him; that they were even somewhat jealous for the honor of their Master. John also, doubtless, knew that his public official work was done (see John 3 : 30), and was desirous that his disciples should be prepared to coincide entirely with the disciples of Jesus, and become a component part of their company. As preparatory to such a result, and as confirming their minds in the belief of the Messiahship of Jesus, he may have taken this step. In this transaction, too, God may have had the additional purpose of fortifying the mind of John himself, and of preventing any disheartening surmises from arising in his mind. He had been for some time shut up in prison, cut off from intercourse with society; his mind was in danger of being warped, and of looking at things on the dark side; and it was not impossible, though he had had such signal manifestations of Jesus' being the Messiah, and had so often and so publicly declared him to be the Messiah, that

7 And, as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? a reed shaken with the wind?

8 But what went ye out for to see? a man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they that wear soft *clothing* are in kings' houses.

9 But what went ye out for to see? a prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.

10 For this is *he* of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist:

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in some gloomy moment the distressing apprehension should arise that the Messiah was yet to come.

7. Jesus took occasion to speak highly in commendation of John, as an inspired religious teacher, and the forerunner of the Messiah. It was as such that he was distinguished; and he was a man by no means to be undervalued. *Into the wilderness.* Compare 3: 5. ‖ *A reed shaken with the wind?* a light, inconstant man, worthy of little regard as to his character and his opinions.

8. *Clothed in soft raiment?* delicate, costly garments; a man of wealth and luxury. Compare 3: 4.

9. *A prophet?* This word is applicable not only to one who foretold future events, but to one also who came forward as a religious teacher; one who was especially commissioned as the Lord's servant for instructing men. ‖ *More than a prophet;* one greater than an ordinary prophet.

10. The reason why John was to be accounted greater than any prophet that had preceded him is here given. He was the forerunner of the Messiah. None of the prophets had enjoyed such a distinction. *Of whom it is written;* Mal. 3: 1. The words are here quoted according to their sense, not with perfect exactness as to the language. In Malachi, they foretell the Messiah's times more generally; the Saviour makes a more particular application to himself. For explaining the imagery of these words, see on 3: 3.

11. *A greater than John the Baptist.* By comparing the parallel passage in Luke 7: 28, we shall see that Jesus was speaking of John as a prophet, or a divinely-commissioned religious teacher. It was as *a prophet*, that he was greater than all others; no prophet was greater than he. No one sustained so intimate a relation to the Messiah. The coming of the Messiah was a grand object of expectation and hope; many prophets and kings desired to see his day, but they saw it not. To John, however, was given the signal honor of being his forerunner, of baptizing him, and of pointing him out to the people as *him that was to come.* He was thus in immediate connection with the Messiah as to time and as to office, preparing the way before him. ‖ *He that is least;* as the word *greater*, in this verse, refers to the word *prophet*, which is implied (see Luke 7: 28), so here the same idea is intended — *he that is a very inferior prophet, or religious teacher.* ‖ *In the kingdom of heaven;* the Messiah's dispensation on earth, called the *reign of God*, or *of heaven.* See on 3: 2. ‖ *Greater than he;* a greater religious teacher; because he enjoys immensely greater advantages than John, being taught by the Messiah himself, either personally or by his authorized servants.

Observe: How great is the privilege, and consequently the responsi-

notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.

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bility, of enjoying the gospel! so full is it of information and of salutary influences. Compare 10: 15. 11: 21—24. Heb. 4: 1, 2.

In the above passage, reference is not made to the *moral* worth of John, as compared with others either preceding him or subsequent to him. It is in his *official* capacity, and in respect to his knowledge of the new dispensation, that he is compared with those who preceded, and those who were to follow him. For the corresponding passage, see Luke 7: 18—28.

12. *Kingdom of heaven.* See preceding verse. ‖ *Suffereth violence;* not an injurious, hostile violence, but a violent, that is, earnest, rushing to seek its privileges. Reference is made to the excitement which existed in the mass of the community, leading them out in multitudes to John and to Jesus. See Matt. 3: 5. 4: 23—25. 8: 1. 9: 36. ‖ *The violent;* those who are eager to seize upon the blessings of the new dispensation. ‖ *Take it by force;* seize upon it with avidity, rush forward eagerly to claim its privileges. Compare Luke 16: 16. The people in general had indeed very incorrect notions respecting the character of the Messiah's reign; still, as he had been the object of their hopes so long, they listened with eagerness to the announcement of his approach, and were ready to be impelled in any direction that would give them the hope of enjoying the blessings of the Messiah's reign. The rulers and the Pharisees became almost immediately hostile to Jesus, and at last persuaded the multitude to act with them. But however jealous the great men of the nation were, and however ready to oppose, even from the beginning, yet the common people became immediately favorably impressed towards Jesus as well as towards John, though they had not right notions respecting the spiritual nature of his mission. See Luke 7: 29, 30.

Remark. This expression, *the violent take it by force,* has been sometimes abused, as encouraging *violent bodily excitement* in seeking for pardon and salvation. To such a kind of violence the Saviour made no allusion; but to the *deep interest* which pervaded the *minds* of the community, when the announcement of the Messiah's approach was made, and when John gave instruction so appropriate to the condition and necessities of the people. Violent *bodily* excitement, though it may, in some instances, be connected with genuine religious feeling, is more often, there is reason to fear, connected with such religious feeling as wholly vanishes, and is therefore proved to be unsound (see Matt. 13: 23), or such feeling as does not lie very deep in the soul, and as may issue in that fluctuating sort of religious character which is inconsistent with stability and usefulness. Religion must dwell in *the soul.* The *suppressed sob* and the *concealed tear* are far more certain indications of suitable religious feeling than any unnatural exercises of the body, or any loud expressions either of grief or of joy. Without any such exercises, the soul may be shaken to its very centre by a sense of its guilt and danger. Such a sense of guilt and danger will indeed make a person *earnest* in *striving* (Luke 13: 24) for salvation; but it will be an *earnestness of soul.*

13. *The prophets and the law.* The Jews divided the books of the Old

14 And if ye will receive *it*, this is Elias, which was for to come.

15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,

17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.

18 For John came neither eating nor drinking; and they say, He hath a devil.

19 The Son of man came eating and drinking; and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber, a friend of

Testament into three classes—the law, that is, the Pentateuch, the prophets, and the Psalms. See Luke 24: 44. Sometimes the whole were embraced under the term *the law and the prophets*. As this phrase expressed the books of the Old Testament, it was also equivalent to our expression *Old Testament dispensation*. Such is its meaning here. ‖ *Prophesied;* performed their office, kept in view, by prophecy, the new dispensation. The Old Testament Scriptures contained the revelation of the Lord's will, and of his purpose to send the Messiah. ‖ *Until John.* When John appeared, the time of fulfilment commenced, and a new order of things began to be introduced. His coming was the starting point of the Messiah's dispensation.

14. *Elias.* Compare Mal. 4: 5. *Elias* is the same as *Elijah*, only the name is expressed in Greek letters. The powers of the Hebrew language and of the Greek are different, and such an alteration in the manner of sounding the name was necessary. In Luke 1: 17, we see the reason why the name *Elijah* was a suitable one for John the Baptist. Compare Matt. 17: 10—13. Mark 9: 11—13.

16. *This generation;* the people of this time. They had enjoyed signal advantages of a religious nature, but they had not derived from them that spiritual benefit which might reasonably have been expected. ‖ *Markets;* places of public resort. ‖ *Fellows;* companions.

17 *Piped unto you;* played music in merry strains. ‖ *Mourned unto you;* employed mournful strains. The Saviour pictured to the people a company of capricious children, who would not comply with the wishes of their playmates, but were disposed to be contrary and obstinate. When cheerful music was played, like that becoming a wedding, they sullenly refused to dance; and when, in order to accommodate their unwillingness to be merry, mournful music was played, like that becoming a funeral, they in like manner would not respond to it; so that, whatever was done, they were not pleased, but were finding fault. Similar to the disposition manifested by such children, was the disposition of many, in the time of Jesus, towards John and himself.

18. *Neither eating nor drinking.* Compare Luke 7: 33. He came living in a manner different from the ordinary one as to food (Matt. 3: 4), peculiarly abstemious and austere in his habits, and adapted to make the impression, that he was peculiarly holy and devoted to the service of God. ‖ *He hath a devil.* Instead of tracing his mode of life to its real cause, it was ascribed by many to a demoniacal influence. Thus they were not pleased with John.

19. *The Son of man;* the Messiah, Jesus himself. ‖ *Eating and drinking* (compare Luke 7: 34); living as people in general lived, having no outward peculiarities. Nor did this please them. From this conformity to the prevalent customs as to food,

publicans and sinners. But Wisdom is justified of her children.

20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:

21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

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they drew objections. Thus the capricious disposition manifested by the children in the case supposed, was displayed also by the people of that age towards John and Jesus. But though many exhibited this capricious, untoward disposition, there were not wanting others who were disposed to do justice to the claims of the Messiah and his forerunner. ‖ *Wisdom is justified of her children.* This appears to have been a proverbial saying, amounting to the declaration, that righteousness will be vindicated by its true friends, however it may fail of vindication from others. ‖ *Wisdom;* true goodness, as well as discretion. ‖ *Is justified;* is vindicated, is treated in a just manner. ‖ *Of her children. The children of Wisdom* are the possessors, the followers of Wisdom, who know how to appreciate her. Such perceive the worth of Wisdom, and treat her accordingly. The word *of* has here the meaning of the word *by*. The claims of John and of Jesus would receive ample justice from those who could rightly appreciate their claims and evidence.

If the representation here made by the Saviour respecting the people of that generation should appear inconsistent with what has been said on the 12th verse, let it be considered, that though, from the long-cherished expectation of the Messiah's coming, the announcement of his having come was eagerly received, and there was a great rushing of the people to hail the new reign of heaven, yet, when it was perceived that a new religion was introduced, and that the Saviour was aiming to effect reformation of heart among the people, and not to produce civil and worldly changes, there was by no means a welcome reception of him by the mass of the nation.

21. *Chorazin;* a city of Galilee, in the vicinity of the sea of Galilee. ‖ *Bethsaida;* another city of Galilee, near the sea. ‖ *Tyre and Sidon;* the two principal cities of Phenicia, on the north-western coast of Palestine. Tyre was the seat of immense wealth and power. Its inhabitants are represented in the Old Testament as abounding in pride and luxury, and all sorts of vice. Judgments were denounced against them in consequence of their idolatry and wickedness. The destruction of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar was foretold. Is. 23. Ezek. 26—28. 29: 18. After the destruction by Nebuchadnezzar, the city was again built on a neighboring island; but Alexander the Great afterwards took it, and it never recovered its former prosperity. Sidon was also a very distinguished city; it is mentioned in the Old Testament as far back as the time when Palestine was divided by Joshua among the Israelites. Joshua 19: 28. It was, doubtless, like Tyre, not only wealthy, but also wicked. It was subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, and afterwards by Artaxerxes Ochus. ‖ *In sackcloth and ashes.* Sackcloth was a coarse, dark cloth, made of goat's hair. Of this, a garment was formed like a sack, having arm-holes, and was thrown over the body, reaching below the knees. It was worn on occasions of mourning. Jonah 3: 5. To lie down in ashes, or to put ashes or dust on the head, was also an accompaniment of mourning in the East. Job 2: 8, 12. Jer. 6: 26. Neh. 9: 1. Wicked as these cities were, it might have been reasonably

22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.

23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.

24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.

25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

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expected, that they would not have permitted such advantages as the Jewish cities now enjoyed to be lost upon them. The Saviour used here the language of common life, intending to point out in a very strong manner the guilt of Chorazin and Bethsaida; just as, if we were speaking of a person who had abused exalted privileges, we might select, in order to show our sense of his guilt, the most wicked individual of our acquaintance, and say, Even *he* would have acted in a better manner; even *he* could not have withstood such privileges.

22. The doom of the cities in which Jesus taught and displayed his striking miracles would be far more awful than that of other cities, even the most wicked of ancient times, because their advantages were unspeakably greater, and consequently their guilt was greater. How fearful the application of this principle to those in Christian lands who neglect the great salvation! See Heb. 2: 3.

23. *Capernaum.* See on Matt. 4: 13. ‖ *Exalted unto heaven;* highly distinguished by religious privileges. The Saviour made Capernaum his principal place of residence; and eminently were its inhabitants favored with the teaching and the miracles of Jesus. ‖ *Brought down to hell.* In this case, the words *heaven* and *hell* correspond to one another as our words *high* and *low.* As the people of Capernaum were elevated on high by religious advantages, so, through a neglect and abuse of their advantages, they had exposed themselves to the condemnation of being cast down to an exceedingly low condition of misery. In the world of woe, their condemnation would be severer than that of many others, than that even of guilty Sodom. ‖ *Sodom.* See on 10: 15.

25. The thought that he had occasion thus to lament over many cities and many men of distinction, led the Saviour to an expression of gratitude, that others had been induced to receive him as the Teacher from heaven. *Answered.* This word does not always express in the Bible a reply to a question; it is used to express the beginning as well as the continuance of speaking. ‖ *Thou hast hid these things;* that is, the instructions which Jesus was habitually imparting. By carefully examining the Scriptures, it will be rendered clear, that such an acknowledgment of God's agency is by no means inconsistent with an acknowledgment of Satan's influence upon men's minds, or with the existence of an evil disposition in themselves, and a cherishing of that disposition, as leading them to neglect their religious advantages, and to reject the gospel. Compare what is said on Matt. 6: 13; also Ps. 105: 25. The expression is equivalent to what we should mean by saying, Thou hast permitted these things to be hidden. ‖ *The wise and prudent;* those who account themselves and are regarded by others as wise and discerning (compare 1 Cor. 1: 26—29), and who really are sagacious and prudent on ordinary topics; those who are disposed to place much reliance upon their own judgment and skill. ‖ *Babes;*

26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.

27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and *he* to whomsoever the Son will reveal *him*.

28 Come unto me, all *ye* that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

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the opposite of the preceding terms; those who are conscious of ignorance, and of needing divine instruction and guidance; the humble, who, sensible of their own weakness and incompetency, are willing to be taught and to obey instructions from heaven. ‖ *Hast revealed;* made known, that is, through the teaching to which they listen. The wise and prudent, through an undue self-estimation, failed to regard the instructions of the great Teacher; not feeling their need of such instructions, and not relishing them, they haughtily turned away, and God permitted them to follow their own wayward inclinations, and, through the pride of their hearts, to remain blind to the glorious truths revealed by the Messiah. While, on the other hand, to those who felt their ignorance, and ingenuously acknowledged their need of instruction, God imparted the requisite knowledge. Compare Ps. 25: 9, 14. Is. 5: 21. The sentiment here delivered by the Saviour, Dr. Watts has happily expressed in the following lines: —

"There was an hour when Christ rejoiced,
And spoke his joy in words of praise: —
'Father, I thank thee, mighty God,
Lord of the earth, and heavens, and seas.

'I thank thy sovereign power and love,
That crowns my doctrine with success;
And makes the babes in knowledge learn
The heights, and breadths, and lengths of grace.

'But all this glory lies concealed
From men of prudence and of wit;
The prince of darkness blinds their eyes,
And their own pride resists the light.

'Father, 'tis thus, because thy will
Chose and ordained it should be so;
'Tis thy delight to abase the proud,
And lay the haughty scorner low.'"

One word as to the form of expression. The simple fact, that those who were called wise and prudent failed to discover the glory of the Saviour's truths, was not the ground of the Saviour's grateful expression; but he gave thanks that, though such persons welcomed not the benefit, yet others were made partakers of the divine illumination and bounty. For a similar manner of speaking, which clearly shows how to understand this verse, see Rom. 6: 17. In this passage from the Epistle to the Romans, the apostle gives thanks, not that the Romans had been the servants of sin, but because, having formerly been such, they now had received the truth in the love of it.

27. *All things are delivered unto me.* Jesus, as the Messiah, as the Mediator, was invested with all authority in regard to the new dispensation, so as to be "head over all things to the church." ‖ *No man;* no one, whether in heaven or on earth. ‖ *Knoweth the Son;* has a thorough knowledge of the character and plans of the Messiah, and of the glorious result which he will effect. ‖ *To whomsoever the Son will reveal him.* The Messiah is the great Teacher; to him only is it competent to disclose fully the character of the Most High, and his purposes in regard to the salvation of men. The greatness of the scheme of human salvation is here clearly intimated (see also 1 Pet. 1: 12), and the perfect union of design between the Father and the Son. Our need of divine illumination is plainly exhibited.

28. *Come unto me.* As being the great Teacher, and the head of the new dispensation of religion, and beholding the people misled by their religious guides, he invited them, oppressed by the burden of ceremonies and traditions, destitute of true ease of conscience, to himself, as the one who

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke *is* easy, and my burden is light.

CHAPTER XII.

AT that time Jesus went on the Sabbath-day through the corn; and his disciples were a hungered, and began to pluck the ears of corn, and to eat.

2 But when the Pharisees saw *it*, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the Sabbath-day.

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could give adequate consolation under all their sorrows, and who would welcome all, in every age, that might feel themselves oppressed by ignorance, sin, and trouble.

29, 30. *Take my yoke, &c.* A yoke is an emblem of subjection. The idea then is, Submit yourselves to me, and become my disciples. ‖ *I am meek—and ye shall find rest.* How different from the scribes and Pharisees! See 23: 4. Luke 11: 46.

Reflections. 1. How abundant is the evidence that Jesus was the Messiah, the true Saviour! v. 5. In every subsequent age, the practical influence of his religion has added immensely to the evidence.

2. How great was the honor bestowed on John the Baptist, though he was destitute of worldly splendor, and was so carelessly condemned to death! vs. 9—11.

3. Let us beware of disesteeming the gospel, because it makes no pretensions to external greatness. v. 6.

4. Avoid a captious spirit in regard to religion and to its ministers. v. 16—19.

5. Though we may not be defiled with the sins of Sodom, yet we may be in danger of an unspeakably awful condemnation. vs. 20—24.

6. The spirit of humble docility will be blessed. Let us beware of a self-confident spirit. v. 25.

7. How suitable, that we trust to the teaching of our Lord Jesus Christ! Think of his ability (v. 27); of his kindness and condescension (vs. 28—30). If we feel ourselves oppressed by sin and sorrow, he welcomes us to himself, with every needed assurance of reception and favor. How different is the service of Christ from the methods which the human mind might devise for obtaining the favor of God! how different from the bondage of heathenism, and from the observances of any false religion! Let us, then, give the more earnest heed to Him that speaks to us from heaven.

CHAPTER XII.

1. *At that time;* a general expression, meaning, about the time when the things just spoken of occurred. ‖ *On the Sabbath-day.* From the language of Luke 6: 1, it is generally believed that this Sabbath occurred during the festival of the passover. ‖ *Through the corn.* The word *corn* among us is used in a very limited sense, meaning Indian corn, or maize. It is used in the Bible as equivalent to our word *grain*—a general term, including several varieties, as wheat, rye, barley, &c. The original might here be rendered *through the sown fields*, or *through the fields of grain.* Through such fields there were footpaths. The grain here mentioned was probably barley; for, on the second day of the passover, which occurred in the month Nisan, or Abib, corresponding to our April, it was required that a ripe sheaf should be offered up. Lev. 23: 4—11. The barley was ripe at that season, having been sown the preceding autumn. ‖ *A hungered;* hungry.

2. *That which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath-day.* In Deut. 23: 25, permission was given to a person, who was in another's grain field, to pluck the ears as he passed along. It was

3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did when he was a hungered, and they that were with him;

4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the show-bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?

5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the Sabbath-days the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?

6 But I say unto you, That in this place is *one* greater than the temple.

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not, then, because the disciples took some of the grain through which they were passing, that they were censured, but because they did it on the Sabbath. Thus they were accused of having violated the Sabbath. Among the Jewish rules enforced at that time, was one that forbade reaping on the Sabbath; and the plucking of the grain, and rubbing it in their hands (Luke 6: 1), the Pharisees regarded as a kind of reaping. The punishment for violating the Sabbath, according to the Jewish law, was death. See Ex. 35: 2. Num. 15: 32—36.

3. Jesus vindicated his disciples by ascribing their conduct to necessity. They were in need of food. He appealed first to an incident in David's life. *What David did.* See 1 Sam. chapter 21st. The examples of distinguished pious men, recorded in the Old Testament, had much weight with the Jews. In the instance to which Jesus referred, a priest also was concerned; and according to Deut. 17: 8—13, the decision of a priest had much authority. With this incident in the life of David the Jews would not find fault; and the reason which justified David would also justify the disciples.

4. *The house of God;* the tabernacle, which was a movable sanctuary, prepared during the travels in the desert while the people were on the way to the promised land. Ex. 25: 1—9. 36: 1—7. The tabernacle continued to be the house of worship, till Solomon built the temple. 1 Kings 5: 5, 8, 13, &c. ‖ *The show-bread.* In Lev. 24: 5—9, directions were given for baking twelve cakes, to be renewed every Sabbath, and to be placed, with frankincense sprinkled over them, in a prescribed order, on a table in the tabernacle, which was covered with gold. Ex. 25: 23—30. These cakes, having thus been set out before the Lord, were regarded as peculiarly holy, and were to be eaten by the priests only. These were the show-bread.

5. *In the law;* of Moses, particularly the statutes which have respect to the religious services of the Sabbath. ‖ *The priests in the temple profane the Sabbath.* The Pharisees had accused the disciples of violating the Sabbath, because, by rubbing the ears of grain, they had performed labor. Jesus reminded them, that the very law itself prescribed some labor for the priests on the Sabbath, even in the sanctuary. Num. 28: 9, 10. The sacrifices which they were required to offer, called for some labor on their part. Thus he showed, that the circumstances of men are to be taken into account; and that, in some cases, what some persons might call *work* on the Sabbath, would not be a violation of the Sabbath.

6. *One greater than the temple;* possessing more authority, more right to control the conscience; one whose permission to do a thing is of more weight than any prohibition to do it which was grounded on reverence for the temple. Of course, he meant himself. This he expressed fully in the 8th verse.

At this point, Mark (2: 27) inserts an additional thought, suggested by our Lord in vindication of the disciples; "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." That is, the Sabbath was appointed for the

7 But if ye had known what *this* meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.

8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath-day.

9 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:

10 And behold, there was a man which had *his* hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-days? that they might accuse him.

11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the Sabbath-day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift *it* out?

12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the Sabbath-days.

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benefit of man; and therefore is not of such a nature as to require man to subject himself to misery in order to observe it. Man was not created in subordination to the Sabbath, as though certain statutes concerning the Sabbath must inevitably, on all occasions, be obeyed, whether they comport, or do not comport, with man's well-being.

7. In still another way, Jesus showed the impropriety of the Pharisees' accusation. They had overlooked the true nature of religion, and had given an undue prominence to external ceremonies, while they neglected the kind and merciful temper which is more pleasing to God. *I will have mercy;* I choose, or prefer, mercy. ‖ *Not sacrifice;* that is, comparatively speaking, I ask not for sacrifice, for external service; I require a merciful spirit. I choose a merciful spirit rather than the offering of sacrifices. See Hosea 6: 6. Compare also Matt. 9: 13. The Pharisees urged the external observance of precepts, while they neglected inward piety, especially the exercise of a kind and benevolent temper. Compare Matt. 23: 23. Had they considered well the nature of God's requisitions, they would not have passed censure on such innocent acts as a man's plucking a little grain on the Sabbath to appease the cravings of hunger, while passing through a field.

8. *Lord of the Sabbath-day.* Jesus declared his right to regulate the Sabbath, without respect to any existing opinions on the subject. This was indeed taking very high ground; but it pertained to the province of the Messiah. Compare, as parallel passages, Mark 2: 23—28. Luke 6: 1—5.

9. The event next related appears, by Luke 6: 6, to have taken place on another Sabbath. Matthew unites it in his history with the preceding, on account of the similar circumstances of the two events.

10. *Withered.* The condition of a limb said to be *withered*, was caused by a contraction of the muscles, and was very dangerous. A person, when seized with such a contraction, was unable to alter the position of the limb which was affected. If the hand, for instance, was extended, he was unable to draw it back; if it was not extended, he became unable to stretch it out. It became diminished in size, and dried up. Compare 1 Kings 13: 4—6. ‖ *Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-days?* Many of the Jewish teachers contended that it was not lawful to heal on the Sabbath, unless there was danger of death.

11, 12. By the value of a man's life and happiness, compared with a sheep's, Jesus showed the utter impropriety of the Pharisees' opinion respecting healing on the Sabbath. The Jewish teachers expressly permitted a person to take a sheep out of a pit on the Sabbath. ‖ *To do*

13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched *it* forth; and *it* was restored whole, like as the other.

14 Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.

15 But when Jesus knew *it*, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;

16 And charged them that they should not make him known:

17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I

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well; to perform a good, a merciful act.

13. *Stretch forth.* Such a command might seem inconsistent with what is stated in the note on v. 10. But He, who gave the command, could also, and did, impart the requisite muscular power. So in regard to all the commandments of Christ, in respect to all men, we should remember, "he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." Is. 40: 29. Compare, as parallel passages, Mark 3: 1—6. Luke 6: 6—11.

SUGGESTIONS. 1. Notice the captious disposition of the Pharisees. All the Saviour's works were upright and benevolent; yet the Pharisees were constantly inclined to find fault.

2. Let us beware of magnifying outward, and especially uncommanded, observances, to the neglect of inward piety, and the cherishing of kind and just affections.

3. Notice the benevolence of the Saviour. vs. 7, 12, 13.

4. While we ought carefully to observe the Sabbath, we ought also to remember that true piety dwells in the heart, and consists in love, humility, and benevolence, as much as in outward obedience to God's commands.

5. The Pharisees made religion a grievous yoke. But Christ's yoke is easy.

14. The Pharisees felt themselves overcome by the arguments of Jesus. But their hearts were not rightly affected, and they plotted his destruction. *Held a council;* held a consultation.

15. *Great multitudes followed him.* The common people were better disposed, and were favorably affected by his miracles and teaching; nor was he deterred by the evil designs of the Pharisees from prosecuting his work of mercy.

16. *They should not make him known.* The Pharisees had already become greatly excited against him; and it would have been unseasonable in Jesus to have encouraged the people to spread abroad reports of new miracles. He knew what work he had to perform, and what was the best way of accomplishing it. Hence he sometimes withdrew from public observation, and forbade those who had been benefited, to speak of him publicly, lest he should excite too soon that hostility which was to crucify him.

17. *By Esaias.* See Is. 42: 1—3. Besides the reason just hinted, the character of Christ furnished a reason for his frequently seeking retirement. He was not disposed to be contentious; he was not turbulent. He was remarkably gentle and kind, while yet he was carrying into effect the designs which he had formed. Hence, when it would consist with his duty to retire from the public gaze, and to spend some time in obscurity, he gladly availed himself of the privilege.

will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles.

19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.

20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.

21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

22 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.

23 And all the people were amazed; and said, Is not this the son of David?

24 But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This *fellow* doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils.

25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself, shall not stand:

26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his kingdom stand?

27 And if I by Beelzebub

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18. *Show judgment;* make known that which is just; righteousness, the truth. ‖ *To the Gentiles;* to the nations.

19. He shall not be disposed to make a tumult.

20. *Smoking flax;* a smoking wick. The wick whose flame is just expiring, or which has expired, but which still has a faint spark, he will not rudely quench. The whole verse is expressive of the utmost benevolence and mildness. ‖ *Till he send forth to victory;* till he advance to a victorious issue. ‖ *Judgment;* his just or righteous cause. He will accomplish a victory; but not after the manner of this world. He will do it in the exercise of meekness and benevolence, and will establish, in this way, his reign in the hearts of men.

21. *In his name;* in him. ‖ *The Gentiles;* the nations. In the passage as found in Isaiah, mention is here made of "the isles." By *isles* are meant remote countries, well corresponding to Gentiles.

We cannot but ADMIRE,

1. The prudence of Jesus. He would not encourage a needless excitement, nor needlessly provoke opposition.

2. The mildness and gentleness of Christ.

3. The firm, undeviating prosecution of his object, while yet he had a due regard to the circumstances of the people.

23. *The son of David;* the Messiah, the long-expected King.

24. The Pharisees saw that the common people were ready to hail Jesus as indeed the Messiah. To prevent this, they threw out injurious insinuations. *Beelzebub.* See on 10: 25.

25, 26. In refuting the calumnious charge made by the Pharisees, Jesus presented several considerations. He first showed how absurd it was to make such a representation, as though Satan would fight against himself. Would Satan thus endeavor to destroy his own power? The word *house* here means *family.*

27. Jesus next hinted at the manner in which the accusation of the Pharisees would recoil upon themselves. *Their disciples* (for this is the meaning of the word *children*, as here used) professed to cast out demons, and the Pharisees professed to believe that they did cast them out. Now, said Jesus, If you say I cast out de-

cast out devils, by whom do your children cast *them* out? Therefore they shall be your judges.

28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.

29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.

30 He that is not with me, is against me; and he that gathereth not with me, scattereth abroad.

31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy *against* the *Holy* Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.

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mons by the aid of Beelzebub, how can you avoid the charge of your disciples' casting them out by Satan's aid? Your disciples profess (Acts 19: 13—19) to cast out demons by certain ceremonies: I cast them out by a word. If I do it by Beelzebub, surely your disciples do it by no superior power. *They shall be your judges;* by producing their case as an illustration, I show you your injustice and calumny. This was an argument which would come directly to the bosoms of these men, and must have produced sensations of defeat and shame. Of course, they would not allow, that their disciples were in league with Satan; but they could not justly avoid such a conclusion, if their charge against Jesus had been just. It is well to notice here, that the Saviour did not assert that their disciples actually cast out demons; but as they pretended to do so, he met them on their own ground. Without debating the question, he argued from their pretensions.

28. He then presented the case as it really was. *By the Spirit of God;* by divine energy, the power of God; Luke says (11: 20), *by the finger of God.* ‖ *Kingdom of God;* the promised reign of God on earth; the administration of the King Messiah. Jesus thus represented the expelling of demons as one of the evidences of his being truly the Messiah.

29. He next asserted that the fact of his truly casting out demons clearly evinced his superiority over Satan and all his hosts. There must be a conquest, before the castle of an armed man can be despoiled of its furniture and goods. So Satan must be overcome by superior power, in order that he may let go his captives. So far from being in league with Satan, Jesus, by this illustration, represented himself as having a contest with him, and obtaining a victory over him, and in this way dispossessing him of his prey. *Spoil his goods;* seize upon his property.

30. *He that,* &c. The remark in this verse seems to be a proverbial saying, applicable to a variety of cases. Here, the idea is, that between Jesus and Satan there is hostility. Christ is not on the side of Satan; Satan is not on the side of Christ. Satan was not working for Christ; but, instead of gathering for him, was scattering away from him that which was his due. There is utter opposition of interests between Satan and Christ.

31. Having thus shown, by the absurdity of the charge (vs. 25, 26); by the manner in which it would recoil upon themselves (v. 27); by the superiority to Satan which casting out demons implied (v. 29); by the utter opposition between himself and Satan (v. 30), — how entirely groundless was the charge made by the Pharisees, he then proceeded to point out the exceeding criminality of the charge, and the danger to which it subjected those who made it. *Blasphemy.* This word, in the Scriptures, is of the same signification as the word *calumny* in ordinary use. The Pharisees had, on this occasion, used exceedingly calumnious expressions against the Saviour; and that with reference to his miraculous operations, which indi-

32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the *world* to come.

cated the presence of divine power, and furnished the appropriate evidence of his being what he claimed to be ‖ *Shall be forgiven.* The original language of the New Testament employs the future tense, *shall be*, to express what we mean by the terms *may be, can be, &c.* So, in this place, the idea is, All manner of sin and blasphemy may, or can, be forgiven. ‖ *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost;* calumnious expressions against the clear manifestations of the Holy Spirit's power.

32. The language of this verse is substantially the same as that of the preceding; only there is a more specific mention of calumny against *the Son of man* (that is, the Messiah in his lowly appearance while on earth), as distinct from calumny against the Holy Spirit (that is, against the divine power so indubitably manifested in the Messiah's works). A person might undervalue Jesus on account of various disadvantageous circumstances in which himself had been placed; and, before perceiving the fulness of evidence which he furnished of being the promised Messiah, might even use opprobrious expressions concerning him, as one pretending to be what he was not. A person might do this, without possessing a deeply-seated malignity against Jesus, without a determination to resist the clearest evidence, and to turn even that evidence into a ground of reproach and opposition. Such a person might, notwithstanding, possess a willingness to look at evidence, and to be swayed by it; he might come to repentance, and receive forgiveness. But if he had settled it in his mind, that Jesus must not be acknowledged as the Messiah, whatever evidence might be furnished; if his heart was so obdurately set against Jesus, as to resist the clearest evidence, to reject him when he was manifestly accompanied by the power of God, and to turn into a ground of calumny even these clear manifestations of divine approbation, — what more could be done with reference to such a person? How could there be any hope respecting him? He would indicate a state of heart that resisted God's chosen method, even when that method was clearly manifested as being God's, and not only resisted it, but abusively spoke of it, and threw upon it the highest reproach. Such conduct could not be forgiven. No display more striking and appropriate could be made of the truth of the Messiah's claims; and not coming to feel aright towards him, such a person could not share the benefits of his mediation. ‖ *Neither in this world, neither in the world to come;* never, as it is expressed by Mark 3: 29; neither in time, nor in eternity. The sin here cautioned against is indeed of a most aggravated character, proceeding from a heart fixed in hostility to the Saviour, and determined to reject him even in the midst of miraculous evidence of the truth of his religion. Persons of tender consciences, under a deep impression of religious truth, sensible of their sinfulness and ill desert, are sometimes full of gloomy apprehension that they belong to the number whose condemnation is thus pronounced. But the fact, that they are solicitous for the favor of God, for the forgiveness of their sins, and that they are grieved in view of their ill desert, shows a state of the conscience that is far removed from the condition here alluded to. Rather the daring infidel, and the presumptuous atheist, and the scoffing opposer of all religion, are the persons who are in danger of the doom here denounced. But let all beware, lest, by resisting the truth and neglecting the warnings of conscience, they come to that state of

33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by *his* fruit.

34 O generation of vipers! how can ye, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure, bringeth forth evil things.

36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment:

37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

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moral insensibility, or of settled hostility, which is inconsistent with a yielding of the heart to Christ!

33. Jesus next presented another consideration, suited to show the Pharisees the rashness and impropriety of the charge which they had made. As a tree is known by its fruit, whether it be a good tree or a bad one, so ought they to judge respecting men. *Make the tree good;* that is, as we say, Make out the tree to be good, show it to be good; and its fruit also good. ‖ *Corrupt;* that is, bad. Form a judgment according to the manifestation of character. Grant me to be good, on the ground that my actions are good, or prove me to be bad, on the ground that my actions are bad. And do the same in reference to yourselves; prove yourselves good by your good actions, or let your bad actions prove you to be bad. Bring me and bring yourselves to this test. Compare Matt. 7: 16—20.

34. Having fully vindicated himself, and warned them of their danger, and led them to a right method of judging, he distinctly exposed the wickedness of their characters. *Generation of vipers;* offspring of vipers. The viper was an emblem of injuriousness and wickedness. The Saviour thus intimated that the Pharisees were malicious and hurtful in regard to his cause. Expressions which to us have the appearance of harshness and angry excitement, would be differently understood by the hearers of the Saviour. Such language was more common at that time; and while it would be understood as bitterly reproving them, and casting on them an imputation of great wickedness, it would yet not be regarded as unsuitable. ‖ *How can ye.* As their hearts were evil, so would be their language. Goodness was not to be expected from those who were so evil as to be deservedly called "offspring of vipers."

36. *Every idle word.* The word *idle* has here the accessory meaning, *injurious, wicked.* This declaration was made by our Saviour with reference to the unfounded and malicious accusation brought against him by the Pharisees. The Saviour distinctly declared, that for such idle, wicked language they would be called to account. ‖ *In the day of judgment.* 25: 31. 2 Cor. 5: 10.

37. *Justified;* acquitted, shown to be righteous, when brought to judgment. ‖ *By thy words.* Since the mouth speaketh out of the abundance of the heart, the words which a man utters are indicative of his real character. This is a rule which will generally hold. There are indeed heartless pretensions of love and obedience to God, by which, however, God cannot be deceived. But, in general, the habitual language of a person gives you an index to his character.

The manner in which the Saviour repelled the foul charge of the Pharisees, and the solemn language of

38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.

39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it but the sign of the prophet Jonas:

40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.

42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall

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reproof and caution which he addressed to them, are more fully reported by Matthew than by the other evangelists. Compare Mark 3: 22—30. Luke 11: 14—23.

PRACTICAL HINTS. 1. Let us beware of prejudice and ill-will. See to what it led the Pharisees.

2. Let us seek to have our hearts right; then our conversation and conduct will be right.

3. Let us always act as in view of the day of judgment.

38. The preceding remarks of the Saviour were adapted to bring his adversaries to very serious reflection. But instead of yielding to his views, they professed, that he had not yet given sufficient evidence of his being the Messiah. They wished for some different and special manifestation from on high. ‖ *A sign.* Luke (11: 16) says, *a sign from heaven;* a proof, a token, proceeding from above, from the air, or from the clouds.

39. *Adulterous.* In the Old Testament, the relation between God and the Jewish nation is represented by the relation between husband and wife. See particularly Ezek. 16. As adultery is faithlessness to marriage vows, so faithlessness to engagements entered into with God was signified by the term *adultery.* In this place, then, the word *adulterous* signifies *impious, faithless towards God.* ‖ *There shall no sign be given to it;* that is, no other sign, or proof; no different one than such as have already been given. Signs had already been given, adapted, both in nature and number, to the end. ‖ *But the sign of the prophet Jonas;* no other sign but such a one as is recorded in the history of the prophet Jonah.

40. *Jonas was three days and three nights,* &c. See Jonah 1: 17. ‖ *The Son of man shall be three days and three nights.* Though our Saviour was actually in the sepulchre only from Friday afternoon to Sunday morning, yet, according to ordinary Jewish modes of speaking, he was in the sepulchre three days. The Jews reckoned parts of days for whole days; and the expression *day and night* is only a more full manner of designating *a day.* If a thing took place on the third day after a certain event, they represented it as having taken place three days after that event. Compare Matt. 16: 21, with Mark 8: 31. 2 Chron. 10: 5, with 10: 12. Gen. 42: 17, 18. The Saviour thus referred his cavilling foes to his resurrection as a grand evidence of his being truly the Son of God, the Messiah. See also Rom. 1: 4.

41. *They repented.* Jonah 3: 5, 10.

42. *The queen of the south;* the queen of Sheba, an account of whose visit to Solomon is given in 1 Kings

condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.

44 Then he saith, I will return into my house, from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth *it* empty, swept, and garnished.

45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

46 While he yet talked to the people, behold, *his* mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.

47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.

48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

10: 1—13. Sheba corresponded to what is called Arabia Felix, lying far south from Palestine. ‖ *The uttermost parts of the earth;* that is, from a very distant region.

43—45. Having thus clearly intimated that his hearers would have no just excuse for refusing to acknowledge him as the Messiah, he proceeded to show that they were in signal danger of becoming worse and worse. He drew an illustration from some common opinions respecting demons, and from the manner in which the Jewish exorcists probably spoke on this subject. They pretended to cast out unclean spirits; and when the spirits were declared to be expelled, they were supposed to repair to barren, gloomy spots, seeking for comfort. When the persons out of whom it was pretended evil spirits had been expelled, again gave signs of not being effectually benefited, the exorcists would say, the spirits had come back and taken a firmer possession. Thus what was ordinarily said in reference to demoniacal possessions might be applied to the moral state of that generation. Suitable means for their spiritual welfare had been employed; but the desired effect in its fulness was not produced, and the prospect was, they would become worse and worse. *My house;* the man whom the evil spirit had possessed. ‖ *Dry places;* barren, desolate spots. ‖ *Seven other spirits.* The word *seven* is often used as a sort of round number, as we use the word *ten*, signifying *several*, but not meaning to specify a precise number. As parallel to vs. 38—45, see Luke 11: 24—31.

Remark. Let us beware of resisting the impression of divine truth. It is not innocent nor harmless. To what a state of spiritual blindness and insensibility we may reduce ourselves, we cannot conceive.

46. *His brethren.* See on 1: 25.

49. *Behold my mother and my brethren;* those towards whom I cherish affection similar to that which is usually cherished towards parents and brothers.

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50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea-side.

2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow:

4 And when he sowed, some *seeds* fell by the way-side, and the fowls came and devoured them up.

5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth; and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched: and because they had no root, they withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them.

8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some a hundred fold, some sixty fold, some thirty fold.

9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

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50. *The same is my mother*, &c.; is regarded by me with peculiar affection; an affection similar, as to the interest which it leads me to feel in him, to that which one feels for the nearest relatives. Compare Mark 3: 31—35. Luke 8: 19—21.

NOTICE, in vs. 46—50, 1. The Saviour's devotion to his official work, and his delight in it.

2. His kind regard for those who wish to serve God, and the honor connected with being his disciples.

3. His supreme regard to the glory of God.

Are we securing for ourselves this deep interest in our welfare on the part of the Saviour?

CHAPTER XIII.

1. *The sea-side;* the shore of the sea of Galilee.

3. *Parables;* illustrations, short narratives, framed for explaining and enforcing some important truth.

8. *Hundred fold.* The increase here represented occurred in various productions. Compare Gen. 26: 12. The Saviour intended to show the various and abundant measures of spiritual good drawn from religious instruction.

11. *Mysteries.* This word sometimes means, in respect to religion, doctrines or things incomprehensible. Here, however, it means, things not yet disclosed, truths respecting which instruction had not yet been received; as it were, the interior truths of the new religion. ‖ *The kingdom of*

12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

13 Therefore speak I to them in parables; because they, seeing, see not; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand.

14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

15 For this people's heart

heaven. See on 3:2. The Saviour intimated, that while the disciples enjoyed better advantages, and received more light respecting the new dispensation, the people were not yet in a suitable condition to have all these truths plainly set before them. Many of the great truths of the new religion must be gradually brought to their minds, and for a time be veiled under the cover of illustrations and comparisons. ‖ *It is not given;* not *now* given, not *yet* given.

12. *For whosoever hath,* &c. For it is a general rule in the government of God, that a person who already has advantages, and makes a good use of them, will find an increase of advantages and of benefit; while, on the contrary, if a person has not advantages, or has very few, it is not easy for him to add to his stores, and he is in great danger of losing even what he has. To illustrate the thought, it may be observed, that a rich man is in the best condition to become yet richer; a poor man, instead of increasing his means, is more in danger of losing what he has. The disciples were in the condition of men having advantages and having begun to reap benefit from them; so that they might go on and increase; the mass of the people were in the condition of men destitute of advantages, or who, being in the midst of advantages, do not know it, and do not know how to turn them to account, and thus are in danger of losing them.

13. *Therefore;* on account of the people's state, their not being in that condition of mind necessary for an improvement of signal advantages; on account of their not being in a suitable state to receive a full disclosure of the great truths relating to the new dispensation. This thought is more fully expressed in the next words. ‖ *Because they, seeing, see not.* These words, and the rest of the verse, explain the word *therefore.* Though they are in favorable advantages for seeing, yet they see not; they are spiritually blind; and the exhibition of religious truth must be adapted to their intellectual and moral state. The full blaze of truth would overpower them: it must come to them covered with the veil of a parable. ‖ *Hearing,* &c. Though they hear, they do not understand. They are dull of apprehension.

14. *In them;* in their case, in respect to them. ‖ *Is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias;* the declaration of Isaiah (6:9, 10) is strictly applicable to them. The language now quoted was originally used with reference to those to whom Isaiah was sent; but the declarations were equally applicable to the people in the time of Jesus. ‖ *By hearing ye shall hear;* a form of expression which indicates intensity. Instead of the word *shall,* the word *will* would more exactly express the thought; thus, Ye will indeed hear, but ye will not understand. ‖ *Seeing ye shall see;* ye will indeed see, but you will not perceive.

15. *For this people's heart — ears — eyes.* These various expressions strongly indicate dulness of apprehension and insensibility in respect to religious truth. ‖ *Lest.* The original expression, thus rendered, is frequently used to indicate not the *design* for which a thing is done, or permitted,

is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

16 But blessed *are* your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see *those things* which ye see, and have not seen *them;* and to hear *those things* which ye hear, and have not heard *them.*

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but a *result*, or consequence of that thing. In order to express correctly the real thought of the original, some modification of the language in this verse is necessary, in conformity to the remark just made; thus, "This people's heart is waxed gross," &c., so that they will not see with their eyes, nor hear with their ears, nor understand with their heart, nor be converted [turned from their evil ways], nor will I heal them [that is, deliver them from their miserable state, and make them happy].

Such being the moral condition of the people, kindness and wisdom required that their Teacher should condescend to their low estate, and adapt his manner of instruction to their capacities. Through the influence of false teachers during many generations, the people had sadly degenerated, and had contracted a multitude of religious errors. The method of instruction by parables was peculiarly adapted to their state. It was interesting, and would excite attention, and many of the similes would be long remembered, and their true meaning would insensibly break forth upon their minds. It would lead them to some correct views before they were aware; for, by the force of an illustration, assent would be almost unconsciously yielded. At the same time, the truths thus delivered were covered by a thin veil, and were not immediately apprehended: thus, while instant rejection might be the result of presenting the naked truth, attention to the truth was secured by the interesting covering under which it was couched; and yet, without reflection, the truth delivered would not be discerned; so that there was need of attention and thought, for want of which many heard as though they heard not. Thus this method of instruction, while it was adapted to their low state of moral and religious perception, still made a demand upon their attention and candor. And though many of the parables might not be thoroughly apprehended at the time they were spoken, their effect would be seen hereafter. An observation in Mark 4: 33 sustains this view of the reason why Jesus taught by parables. To the disciples, as they were somewhat enlightened, and were in a comparatively candid state of mind, and were thus prepared for further disclosures, the Saviour spoke more unreservedly, and explained the parables whenever they requested it. Mark (4: 21, &c.) and Luke (8: 16, &c.) present the additional thought that the disciples were in due time to make known clearly the Saviour's instructions.

16. *Blessed are your eyes — your ears;* happy are ye, for to you the truths are disclosed which are not apprehended by others.

17. *Many prophets and righteous men.* The religious teachers and the pious men of former days looked with much desire for the coming of the Messiah. For parallel passages, see Mark 4: 1—12. Luke 8: 4—10.

NOTE. How great a blessing it is to enjoy the instructions of the Son of God!

18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth *it* not, then cometh the wicked *one*, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way-side.

20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it:

21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.

22 He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

23 But he that received seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and understandeth *it;* which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty.

24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

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19. *The word of the kingdom;* instruction pertaining to the reign of the Messiah; that is, to true religion. ‖ *Understandeth it not;* receives it not into his mind and heart. ‖ *The wicked one;* Satan, the great adversary of men's souls, whose influence impedes the salvation of men.

20. *Anon;* immediately.

21. *The word;* the doctrine taught by the Messiah. ‖ *He is offended;* he meets with a stumbling-block in the "tribulation or persecution," and is induced to turn away, to renounce the Saviour and commit sin. The word *offend* in the Bible means *to occasion one to sin;* thus, in this passage, *he is led to commit sin.* See on 5: 29, 30.

The solemn caution of our Saviour in this parable is always applicable. The instructions of the Bible are received in a great variety of ways; but no real good is done to the soul in respect to salvation unless they be received so as to bring forth fruit in persevering obedience to God. Let us see to it that we are *habitually* under the influence of religious truth; and that we are bringing forth much fruit; so shall we prove ourselves our Lord's disciples. John 15: 8. Parallel passages, Mark 4: 13—20. Luke 8: 11—15.

24. *The kingdom of heaven;* the Messiah's dispensation; the state of things under the government of the Messiah on earth.

25. *Tares.* The weed expressed by the original word is a worthless plant, found in Palestine, which resembles wheat in its stalk. It infests grain fields.

26. *Then.* The distinction between genuine wheat and the weed mentioned becomes manifest when the fruit is forming.

The explanation of this parable is given by our Lord in a subsequent part of this chapter. 36—43.

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou, then, that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay: lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field:

32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

33 Another parable spake he unto them: The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables: and without a parable spake he not unto them;

35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house; and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

31, 32. The design of the parable in these verses is, to show the increasing nature of the Messiah's government on earth. Its commencement was exceedingly small; but it was to spread to an indefinite extent. Compare Dan. 2: 44. 7: 13, 14. *A grain of mustard seed.* This is thought by some writers not to mean the common mustard, but the seed of a plant, common in Palestine, having various resemblances to it, and having in common conversation the same name. The seed and the plant answer to the description here given by our Lord. Compare Mark 4: 30—32.

33. The design of the parable in this verse is the same as that in the two preceding verses.

35. *That it might be fulfilled*, &c. The language of the psalmist (Ps. 78: 2) might be applied to our Saviour's manner of teaching. As the psalmist proposed to recount God's former dealings with his people not in a plain, prosaic style of declaration, but under the cover of poetical expression, which to some minds has a measure of obscurity as well as of interest, so the Saviour veiled his instructions under the cover of parables.

36. *Declare unto us;* explain to us. The Saviour then proceeded minutely to explain the parable contained in vs. 24—30. From his explanation, its

37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man:

38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom: but the tares are the children of the wicked *one.*

39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun, in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

44 Again: The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he

design appears to have been, to correct certain erroneous notions respecting the government of the Messiah. There was a prevalent belief that the Messiah was to act peculiarly in behalf of the Jewish nation; he showed them that his object was far more extensive. v. 38. The opinions of the mass of the people were too much limited to some splendid events in the present life; he directed their attention to another world, as affording the special object which he had in view. v. 43. They indulged the notion, that the descendants of Abraham were of course to be partakers of the Messiah's favor and glory; he showed them that his government had respect to character, and that it was solely by men's being righteous, or wicked, that they would be objects of the Messiah's favor or of his indignation. 41—43.

38. *The field is the world;* not the world, as we frequently use the term, in distinction from the church; but *the whole earth.* ‖ *Children of the kingdom;* the subjects of the Messiah, to whom pertain the blessings of his administration. ‖ *Children of the wicked one;* those who belong to Satan, who are like him in respect to being sinful.

41. *All things that offend;* literally, all stumbling-blocks; that is, all persons whose influence is sinful and injurious.

42. *Cast them into a furnace of fire;* metaphorical language, employed to express the punishment of the wicked, and adapted to the image before employed — the tares. See also 25: 41. Rev. 20: 15.

43. *Shine forth as the sun;* another metaphor, showing the future glory of the righteous. Compare Dan. 12: 3. Rev. 2: 28.

Notice, 1. The present state of things will have an end.

2. Our destiny hereafter will depend upon our character in the sight of God.

3. The fate of the wicked must be unspeakably awful. v. 42.

4. Glorious will be the state of the righteous. v. 43.

5. Being associated on earth with the people of God will be of no avail to us at the last day, if our characters have not been like theirs. God will sever the wicked from among the righteous. On earth, they are mingled together; but there will be an everlasting separation by him who cannot err.

44. The similitude in this verse shows the inestimable value of the blessings bestowed by the Saviour.

hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

45 Again: The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls;

46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

47 Again: The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just:

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe *which is* instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man *that is* a householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things* new and old.

53 And it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished

They are preferable to all other objects of regard. Nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of our acquiring them. All things else ought to be sacrificed for their sake.

45, 46. The same thought is enforced in these verses as in the preceding. Every thing ought to be given up rather than not to acquire the blessings which the Saviour proposes.

47—50. The object of the similitude in these verses is substantially the same as in verses 37—43; namely, the Messiah's dispensation has principal respect to men's condition in another world; and the blessings which he bestows will be given to the truly righteous, while the wicked will be condemned to misery. Under the dispensation of the Messiah on earth, the good and the bad are mingled together in society; but there will be a separation according to the character of each. The parable here, it will be perceived, occupies vs. 47, 48; the Saviour explains it in vs. 49, 50.

52. *Every scribe.* A scribe among the Jews was a person skilled in the Jewish law, and thus qualified to be a religious teacher. The Saviour used the word here in the general sense of *religious teacher*, with principal reference to those instructed by himself. || *Instructed unto the kingdom of heaven; taught in respect to* the Messiah's dispensation, or, as we say, the gospel, the religion introduced by the Saviour. || *Householder;* head of a family. || *Things new and old.* The Saviour compared a religious teacher to a head of a family. The head of a family provides for the wants of the family, and those wants require various articles of food, for instance, new articles as well as old, served up according as the welfare of the family shall demand. So the religious teacher, appointed and qualified to promote the spiritual welfare of men, should communicate instruction on the various topics connected with religious improvement, and adapted to their various states as to subject and manner of teaching. There should be a mixture of new thoughts and old ones; common topics ought to be

these parables, he departed thence.

54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this *man* this wisdom, and *these* mighty works?

55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this *man* all these things?

57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house.

58 And he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief.

CHAPTER XIV.

AT that time, Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus;

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treated, sometimes in this way and sometimes in that; and without any affectation of novelty or originality, unusual subjects should sometimes be presented, and variety be sought in order to impress the mind with whatever truths may appear to be demanded by the spiritual welfare of the people.

54. *His own country;* more strictly, the town in which he was brought up, Nazareth. ‖ *He taught them in their synagogue.* Mark informs us (6: 2) that this occurred on the Sabbath.

55. *Carpenter's son.* Mark says (6: 3), *Is not this the carpenter?* Jesus probably wrought at the occupation of his reputed father, Joseph. ‖ *His brethren.* See on 1: 25.

56. *Whence then, &c.* Such uncommon powers as he manifested proved him to be no common person. And yet such was the family to which he belonged, and such the outward circumstances of himself, that they knew not how to account for his being so intelligent, and endowed with such ability for "mighty works."

57. *They were offended in him.* To be offended in respect to any one, is, in scriptural use, to be induced to do wrong in respect to him, to commit sin in reference to him, to reject him. *In him* means *in respect to him.* The inhabitants of Nazareth, by reason of the low state of Jesus' family, and through ill-will from various causes, were induced to reject his claim to be the Messiah. His appearance and outward circumstances did not correspond to what they thought should belong to such an object of distinction as the Messiah, so that they were stumbled in respect to him. ‖ *In his own country;* his native place, place of residence. For the parallel passage, see Mark 6: 1—6.

NOTICE, 1. The power of prejudice. vs. 54—57.

2. The importance of being candid in judging, especially of religious matters. Let us yield to evidence. It is no mark of strength of mind, to persist obstinately in our preconceived notions.

3. The disastrous influence of unbelief in hindering the bestowal of blessings on our souls. v. 58.

How inexcusable in *us*, to refuse belief in Jesus Christ! Evidence of his having been sent from God, and of his religion's being true, has been accumulating age after age, and has been increasing in variety and power. The efforts of infidelity have served to show the firmness of the Christian's foundation.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. *Herod the tetrarch.* This was Herod Antipas, son of Herod the

2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.

3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put *him* in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.

4 For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.

5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

Great, and own brother to Archelaus. 2 : 22. After the death of his father, he was appointed to the government of Galilee and Perea, that is, the southern part of the country on the east of the Jordan. He had the title of *tetrarch*. Luke 3 : 1, 19. 9 : 7. This word originally meant *a ruler of a fourth part*, of a kingdom, for instance; but it had lost its original signification, and was applied, as occasion required, like any other general name of office. On account of Herod's being a ruler, the name *king* is also applied to him in the 9th verse, and in Mark 6 : 14.

2. *His servants*. A king's officers and courtiers are sometimes called his *servants*. ‖ *This is John the Baptist*. Herod had a great respect for John the Baptist, as an eminently holy man. See Mark 6 : 20. But in an evil hour he had ordered him to be put to death. His conscience, doubtless, made him ever after uneasy; and the reports which he now heard respecting Jesus as an eminent religious teacher, and as performing signal miracles, brought his crime afresh to remembrance. There were prevalent, also, among the Jews, some vague opinions concerning the resurrection of some distinguished prophets, in order to assist in the establishment of the Messiah's reign. These opinions seem to have excited in his mind the thought that John had been raised from the dead, and that he was now endued with greater power than before. Compare Mark 6 : 14—16. Luke 9 : 7—9.

3. Matthew having alluded to the death of John the Baptist, which had taken place some time before, but which he had not yet mentioned, proceeded to relate the circumstances attending that event. *Put him in prison*. Josephus, the Jewish historian, relates that John was imprisoned in the castle of Machaerus, a town in Perea, the southern part of the region east of the Jordan. ‖ *For Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife*. The Philip here mentioned was not the tetrarch of Iturea, mentioned by Luke (3 : 1), but another person, an obscure son of Herod the Great, who was in private life, having been disinherited by his father. He is also named *Herod* by Josephus. Herodias was a granddaughter of Herod the Great, and was married to her uncle Philip. She was afterwards induced to abandon Philip and become the wife of his brother, Herod Antipas. To prepare the way for this illegal marriage, Herod the tetrarch divorced his former wife, who was a daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petrea. Thus there was an unusual complication of guilt in this transaction. Besides the consequences here related by Matthew, a bloody war was also provoked between Herod and Aretas.

4. *It is not lawful*. John had not scrupled to declare Herod's conduct as guilty. It is possible that Herod, after he had accomplished his designs, consulted John with reference to the marriage, so as to obtain some favorable remark from him that might avail to prevent the censures of the people. In some way, it happened that John had occasion to express an opinion as to the lawfulness of Herod's proceedings.

5. *When he would have put him to death;* when, or though, he desired to put him to death. ‖ *He feared the multitude*. He had reason to apprehend, from the reverence which the people cherished for John, that they

6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.

7 Whereupon he promised, with an oath, to give her whatsoever she would ask.

8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.

9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless, for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded *it* to be given *her*.

10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.

11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought *it* to her mother.

12 And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.

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might be excited to seditious movements, if violence was exercised towards him.

6. *The daughter of Herodias;* Salome, the daughter of Philip and Herodias.

7. *Whatsoever she would ask.* Mark (6: 23) adds, *even to the half of my kingdom.*

8. *Before instructed of her mother.* Mark relates, that she went out and inquired of her mother what she should ask. ‖ *A charger;* a dish, a platter. ‖ *John Baptist's.* This manner of expression seems to imply that these two words were the name of John. The words should have been rendered *John the Baptist;* just as they are in 11: 11.

9. *For the oath's sake.* His oath, however, was a rash one, and surely ought not to have been regarded, when it was leading to murder. Nor did Herod anticipate so unreasonable a request. Yet, as he had given his word, his honor was committed, and his guests doubtless contributed their influence to procure a compliance with the demand. An undue regard for them, as well as a false sense of honor, hardened him, so that he gave the unjustifiable order. So TRUE it is, that the fear of man bringeth a snare. Prov. 29: 25.

10. *And he sent.* Mark says (6: 27), he sent *immediately.* The whole account implies that the order was immediately executed. This leads to the belief, that Herod was holding this entertainment, not in Galilee, but in the town of Machaerus. It was customary for rulers to have palaces in different parts of their country for temporary residence.

11. No one can fail to be struck with the appearance of coarseness and cruelty exhibited in this verse, so contrary to female delicacy.

TOPICS FOR REFLECTION. 1. Notice the progress of sin. Herod and Herodias became at length stained with innocent blood.

2. Notice the intoxicating nature of worldly amusements. Feasting and dancing led the way to the murder of John.

3. When the fear of man rules, to the exclusion of the fear of God, we have no safeguard against crime. While the fear of man may, in some circumstances, keep us from certain crimes (v. 5), it may, in other circumstances, lead us to those very crimes. v. 10.

4. Outward refinement is consistent with the most unbecoming inward coarseness and cruelty.

5. Nothing gives such true purity and elevation to the character as does religion.

12. *His disciples;* John's disciples. Compare 11: 2. ‖ *Told Jesus.* They knew he would sympathize with them, and that he had a high esteem for John. Mark (6: 21—29) gives the parallel passage.

13 When Jesus heard *of it*, he departed thence by ship into a desert place, apart: and when the people had heard *thereof*, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.

16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.

18 He said, Bring them hither to me.

19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to

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13. *He departed thence.* This is here stated in immediate connection with Jesus' having heard of John's being put to death. Jesus may have thought it prudent to retire awhile from public notice, lest the common people, excited by the murder of John, might make commotion against Herod, and tumultuously set up himself as their king. The mass of the people were doubtless ready for any such movement. They understood not the true nature of Jesus' object; and Jesus carefully avoided giving them any occasion for making civil disturbances. If this was one reason for Jesus' retiring at this time, Mark (6: 30, 31) suggests still another. A comparison of the passage just mentioned, and of Luke 9: 10, with the one under consideration, shows, that just at this time, the twelve apostles returned from their mission (10: 5); and Jesus wished to take them aside with himself for obtaining seasonable rest from their labors, and doubtless for further instruction and spiritual improvement. A comparison of this passage in Matthew with John 6: 1, shows, that Jesus retired to the eastern shore of lake Tiberias, that is, the sea of Galilee. From Luke, also (9: 10), we learn more particularly that he went to the vicinity of Bethsaida. There was a town of this name (also named Julias) on the east of the sea, as well as one on the west. Jesus went "by ship," in a boat. A great concourse went "on foot." ‖ *Into a desert place;* a thinly-settled place. See on 3: 1.

14. *Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude.* By comparing John 6: 3—5, it will appear, that Jesus had retired with his disciples to a mountain; and afterwards, he turned his attention to the multitude.

17. *Loaves.* The bread used in Palestine did not correspond to our loaves. The word *cakes*, or *biscuits*, would agree better with the kind of bread. These cakes were made round, "and were nine or ten inches in diameter. The unleavened cakes were not thicker than a knife, but the leavened were as thick as a man's little finger. The bread was not cut with a knife, but broken."

19. *To sit down.* The word in the original signifies *to recline*, in conformity with the custom then prevalent of placing the body in a recumbent posture, when about to take a meal. From Luke 9: 14, 15, we learn that the people were arranged in companies of fifty; Mark says more particularly (6: 40), they were arranged in companies, some of fifty and some of a hundred. ‖ *He blessed;* he blessed God for the food.

his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained, twelve baskets full.

21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain, apart, to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.

24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.

27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

28 And Peter answered him, and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.

29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.

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20. *Filled.* Satisfied, had a sufficiency. || *Twelve baskets.* The Jews, when on a journey, were in the habit of taking baskets with them, as there were not public houses provided with articles of food, and as food not prepared under their own inspection, especially if prepared by Gentiles, might expose them to uncleanness.

21. *Beside;* without, not including. As parallel passages, compare Mark 6: 32—44. Luke 9: 10—17. John 6: 1—14. That a very deep impression was made on the multitude, by this miracle, is manifest from John 6: 14, 15.

22. *Constrained;* directed, urged. || *A ship;* the boat in which they had come to the east side of the sea. || *Unto the other side.* Mark mentions Bethsaida as the place to which he directed them. There was a Bethsaida on the west of the sea.

23. *The evening.* In verse 15, *the evening* is mentioned, before the people were miraculously fed. To explain this, it is only necessary to remark, that the Jews reckoned two evenings, one from three o'clock until sunset, the other from sunset till dark.

25. *Fourth watch.* In the time of Christ, the Jews, in imitation of the Romans, divided the night into four watches: I. Evening, from twilight to nine o'clock. II. Midnight, from nine to twelve. III. Cock-crowing, from twelve to three. IV. Morning, from three to daybreak. See Mark 13: 35. The time here specified then was, as we should say, towards morning. The more ancient Hebrews divided the night into three watches: I. The beginning, or first watch, continuing till midnight. Lam. 2: 19. II. The middle watch, from midnight to cock-crowing. Judges 7: 19. III. The morning watch, from the end of the second to the rising of the sun. Ex. 14: 24. 1 Sam. 11: 11.

31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth *his* hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.

34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.

35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;

36 And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

CHAPTER XV.

THEN came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,

2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.

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31. *O thou of little faith.* His confidence in Jesus diminished, when he thought of the boisterousness of the weather. On various occasions, Jesus showed the importance of a persevering confidence in his power.

33. *Worshipped;* bowed down and did obeisance, according to the custom of the country, when persons wished to show signal respect, or were struck with awe at the greatness of any one. ‖ *The Son of God;* the Messiah.

34. *Land of Gennesaret;* the name of a region in Galilee, on the northwest shore of the lake of Tiberias, about four miles long, and three broad. The more ancient name was *Cinnereth*, so called from a city mentioned in Josh. 19: 35. The sea of *Chinnereth* is also mentioned in Num. 34: 11, which is the same as the lake of Gennesaret, or the sea of Galilee, or the sea of Tiberias. Mark relates (6: 45), that the disciples were to go to Bethsaida, that is, on the west of the sea. John observes (6: 17), that they went to, or towards, Capernaum; and Matthew, that "they came into the land of Gennesaret." The map of the country may explain these diverse statements. From Bethsaida on the east, they were to go to Bethsaida on the west: they took Capernaum, in the way; then directed their course to Bethsaida on the west, which is a town in the land or region of Gennesaret, where they at length arrived.

36. *The hem of his garment.* Compare 9: 20—22. As parallel passages, examine Mark 6: 45—56. John 6: 15—21.

REMARKS. 1. Jesus sought for opportunities of private prayer. v. 23. His spirit needed thus to be refreshed and strengthened. What an example for *us!*

2. If we have the presence and favor of Jesus, we need not cherish fear, however appalling our outward circumstances may be. v. 27.

3. Let us beware of too highly estimating our measure of faith. vs. 28—30.

4. Notice the kindness of Jesus, in rescuing his desponding and sinking disciple. v. 31.

5. Notice the wonderful power of Jesus. v. 36. Let us trust our diseased souls to his care.

CHAPTER XV.

2. *The tradition of the elders.* Besides the precepts in the law of Moses,

3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?

4 For God commanded, saying, Honor thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to *his* father or *his* mother, *It is* a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;

6 And honor not his father or his mother, *he shall be free.* Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.

7 *Ye* hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,

8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with *their* lips; but their heart is far from me.

9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

10 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:

11 Not that which goeth in-

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the Jews were taught to regard as sacred, and as of binding authority, certain traditions which had been handed down from very remote times. The *elders* were the ancients, teachers of former times, whose decisions and instructions formed a large part of the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees. Among these was the rule, that the hands must be washed before eating, lest some uncleanness should be contracted; for the food was taken up by the fingers. See Mark 7: 3, 4.

3. *Transgress.* Some of these traditions led to a breaking of God's express commands; as the Saviour illustrated in the following verses.

4. *God commanded.* Ex. 20: 12. 21: 17.

5. *It is a gift;* that is, a consecrated offering to God, and therefore put out of my power. The thing, money, for instance, by which I might have aided thy necessities, I have devoted to the temple, as a gift to God.

6. *He shall be free;* that is, from the command of God, mentioned in v. 4. These words were added by the translators so as to make the sense of the passage more plain. ‖ *Of none effect;* annulled, rendered powerless. They taught, that if a child would devote to the service of the temple what might otherwise be employed for relieving his parents' necessities, he would be released from the obligation to honor his parents, on the ground that the temple, or, as we might say, the cause of religion, was unquestionably superior to any other claims. See Mark 7: 12. Thus they directly contravened an express statute of Jehovah.

7. *Prophesy of you.* Is. 29: 13. In the passage referred to, Isaiah was speaking of the nation's character in his day. Jesus declared that what the prophet Isaiah uttered as descriptive of the Jewish nation, was still applicable to them, particularly to those who were leaders, as the scribes and Pharisees. As in many other instances, so here, the quotation is not precisely in the words of the Old Testament writer; the thought is the object aimed at.

Reflections. 1. Let us take heed to the word of God, and make that our standard of religious belief and practice. v. 3.

2. See how highly the Saviour estimated the performance of filial duty. vs. 4—6.

3. A mere external show of piety is of little account. v. 8.

4. Let us be heartily sincere and consistent in our religious profession. Let the heart and the lips agree. vs. 8, 9.

11. *Not that, &c.* That is, not what a man eats, but what a man talks of,

to the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended after they heard this saying?

13 But he answered and said, Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.

14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

15 Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.

16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?

17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?

18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.

19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.

20 These are *the things* which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.

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or proposes to do, produces defilement. The various minute prescriptions in the Mosaic law respecting uncleanness had been abused and greatly extended by subsequent teachers; and the distinction between a mere external or civil uncleanness, and that which rests on the soul, had been wholly overlooked by many. To such an extent had this been carried, that the most polluting inward sins, if there was no ceremonial uncleanness, were regarded very lightly, if at all.

12. *Offended;* took offence, and were induced to think and speak in a wrong manner; were rendered indignant.

13. *Every plant, &c.* The effect produced on the Pharisees was not at all surprising to Jesus. It was what might have been expected. They taught false doctrines; and the teachings of Jesus, who came from God, and taught only the truth, must cross their track. And every doctrine not having God for its author, must be exposed and removed. A teacher is in this verse compared to a husbandman, and the sentiments which he inculcates, to plants.

15. *Declare;* explain. || *This parable.* This word here means the *weighty sentiment* expressed in v. 11.

17. *Food.* Food received into the mouth affects only the body. It enters not into the heart (Mark 7: 19), and thus does not affect the character, and consequently has nothing to do with moral cleanness or uncleanness.

18. *Those things which proceed out of the mouth;* those things about which men talk, and which they propose to do; those things which proceed from the heart, and have a moral quality, and indicate the real characters of men. It is from what exists in the heart that defilement proceeds.

19, 20. The principle just stated Jesus then illustrated. All sorts of sin, things which really pollute a man in the sight of God, come from the heart. But to eat with *washed* or with *unwashed* hands, has no connection with the heart in the sight of God. || *Evil thoughts;* wicked designs, as well as thoughts. || *Blasphemies;* calumnious speaking. Compare, as the parallel passage, Mark 7: 1—23.

Practical Hints. 1. The heart is the seat of sin. "Keep thy heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life." Prov. 4: 23.

21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.

22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread and to cast *it* to dogs.

27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

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2. Peculiar scrupulosity about little uncommanded things may be consistent with a deeply-depraved heart.

3. Our Lord's instructions were eminently spiritual. His religion is adapted to men every where in order to fit them for a holy heaven. Holiness he makes the sum and substance of religion. Without this, all external scrupulosity is utterly vain.

21. *Tyre and Sidon;* cities of Phenicia, in the north-west part of Palestine. See on 11: 21.

22. *A woman of Canaan.* Canaan was formerly the name of Palestine. See Gen. 12: 5, 6. This woman was probably descended from the ancient inhabitants of the land, as were probably many inhabitants of Phenicia. Mark (7: 26) says, that this woman was *a Greek*, that is, a Gentile, and *a Syrophenician.* She was thus called, because she lived in Phenicia, and Phenicia was at that time connected with the province of Syria under the Roman government.

23. *Besought him,* that is, in her favor, wishing him to grant her request, and let her go.

24. *House of Israel;* the Jews.

25. *Worshipped.* See on 2: 2.

26. *Cast it to dogs.* This expression did not have that harshness, as used by the Saviour, which it would have in our times. Such terms were not unfrequent among the Jews, when speaking of Gentiles. Jesus meant merely to convey to the woman the same thought which he had expressed to the disciples; namely, that the *present* duties of his office did not extend beyond the people of the Jews. He compared himself to the master of a family, whose cares are demanded by his own children, and who is not expected to have a special solicitude for others. The language in which he conveyed the thought, being in the form of a remark, was milder than if it had been in the form of address to the woman; and it was probably softened by some expression of his countenance, or some peculiar tone of voice. Nor did it contain an absolute denial. On the contrary, his reply was so worded as even to excite encouragement and hope in the woman's mind. For the dogs in a house, though not members of the family, yet have a portion of the food which is provided for the family. On this thought the woman laid hold.

28. *Great is thy faith;* thy confidence in my ability and benevolence. In order to bring distinctly to view the

29 And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.

30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:

31 Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.

32 Then Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.

33 And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.

35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake *them*, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat* that was left, seven baskets full.

38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, besides women and children.

39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.

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strength of her confidence, Jesus pursued the course here related. He did not mean to deny her request, nor to worry her mind. The effect on her character, and on the disciples, was doubtless very salutary. That Jesus did not intend to deny her request, is manifest from his bestowing favors at other times on persons not properly belonging to the Jewish nation. Compare 8: 5—13.

Remarks. 1. Perseverance in prayer is necessary.

2. In whatever circumstances we are, let us never suffer our confidence in Christ to waver.

3. Humility is peculiarly lovely and acceptable to God. v. 27.

As the parallel passage, see Mark 7: 24—30.

32. *Have nothing to eat.* Not that they had been destitute all the three days. But now, their supply of food was exhausted.

33. *Wilderness;* thinly-settled place. See on 3: 1. ‖ *To fill.* See on 14: 20.

35. *To sit down;* to recline. The recumbent posture was usual at meals. See on 8: 11.

36—38. Compare 14: 19—21. As a parallel passage, see Mark 8: 1—10.

39. *Magdala.* Mark (8: 10) says *Dalmanutha.* The two places were doubtless contiguous, so that it might with propriety be said he came into the vicinity of the one or of the other. As to the precise situation of these towns, we have not the means of certain information. Some place them south-east of the sea of Galilee, others on the west side.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE Pharisees also and the Sadducees came, and tempting, desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven.

2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be* fair weather: for the sky is red.

3 And in the morning, *It will be* foul weather to-day: for the sky is red and lowering. O *ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times?

4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

5 And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have taken no bread.

8 *Which* when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye

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CHAPTER XVI.

1. *Sadducees.* See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, III. 2. On many points, the Sadducees were at variance with the Pharisees; but they were both hostile to Jesus. ‖ *A sign from heaven;* a sign, a token from above, from the sky, in proof of his being the Messiah. See on 12: 38.

2, 3. *He answered,* &c. Knowing that they had an evil design, Jesus took occasion to rebuke them for not rightly estimating, and not candidly admitting, the abundant evidence which he had already given. They knew how to judge respecting the ordinary appearances of the sky, so as to feel warranted in predicting a change of weather. Yet the evidences which he had given of being the Messiah, were as appropriate, and, to a candid mind, as convincing, as those about which they felt no difficulty. ‖ *Ye can discern;* discriminate, judge of. ‖ *Signs of the times;* marks, evidences, which pointed out those times to be the times of the Messiah.

4. See on 12: 39.

5. *The other side;* of the sea of Galilee.

6. *Leaven.* Jesus used this word metaphorically to signify the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, or the sentiments with which they *leavened* the people. But the disciples of Jesus misapprehended his meaning, as appears by the next verse. In Mark 8: 15, we read, "the leaven of the Pharisees, and the leaven of Herod." The Saviour's object probably was, to caution his disciples against the insidious attempts of *all* kinds, whether by professedly religious men or by political men, to pervert their minds. In Luke 13: 32, Jesus alludes to the crafty character of Herod, by calling him a *fox.* By Matt. 22: 16, it would appear that Herod had a set of political friends among the Jews, called, from his name, *Herodians.* Against such men, as well as against the Pharisees and Sadducees, Jesus cautioned his disciples; for they were in danger, both by false doctrine and by the subtlety of men in political power.

7. *Because we have taken no bread.* They thought Jesus was unwilling they should procure bread from persons of the classes named, lest they should be defiled by it; just as the Jews were in dread of being polluted by food procured from Gentiles.

8. *Of little faith.* Had they placed a more thorough confidence in Jesus,

among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?

9 Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

10 Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?

11 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake *it* not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?

12 Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?

14 And they said, Some *say that thou art* John the Baptist: some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15 He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am?

16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

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they would have felt how little occasion they had to be troubled in respect to food. He then immediately proceeded to remind them of what had recently taken place in respect to the supplying of food. See 14: 15—21. 15: 22—38. Compare, as the parallel passage, Mark 8: 13—21.

REMARK. Our past experience of God's mercy ought to give us confidence for the time to come. vs. 9, 10.

13. *Cesarea Philippi;* a city in the north part of Palestine, near the source of the Jordan. It was formerly called *Paneas*, and it is generally supposed to have been on the same spot as the ancient city Dan. Judges 18: 26—29. By Philip the tetrarch it was enlarged and embellished, and in honor of the Roman emperor, it was named *Cesarea;* and to distinguish it from Cesarea on the coast of the Mediterranean, it was named *Cesarea Philippi.*

14. *Elias;* Elijah. It was believed by some of the Jews, not only that Elijah (Mal. 4: 5) would appear on earth as an attendant upon the Messiah, but also, that others of the ancient prophets would appear as his assistants.

16. *Christ;* the Messiah. ‖ *Living God;* the true, the real God, in opposition to idols.

17. *Simon Bar-jona;* that is, Simon son of Jonas. Compare John 1: 42. The word *Bar*, when traced to its original language, signifies *son.* This addition was made to the name Simon, in order to distinguish him from others of the same name. ‖ *Flesh and blood;* that is, man, a human being.

18. *Thou art Peter.* Peter is thy name. His name originally and properly was *Simon;* and by way of distinction, *Simon son of Jonas.* See John 1: 42. Very soon after Jesus commenced his public work, he made an addition to Simon's name, which came to be used as his ordinary name.

19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be

This name was characteristic of certain qualities which Jesus perceived in Simon, and was appropriate to the part which Simon was to perform in promoting the cause of Jesus. This name was *Cephas;* and it signified, in the language which Jesus spoke, *a rock.* The word *Cephas*, regarded as a proper name of a man, could well be expressed in the Greek language only by the name translated *Peter.* John 1: 42. Thus, he whose name originally was *Simon*, received the additional name *Cephas* (or *rock*), which is the same as *Peter* in Greek. ‖ *And upon this rock.* Here the Saviour alludes to the radical meaning of the word *Peter;* and points out Peter as a distinguished instrument in the building up of his church. The meaning of the Saviour is the same as we should judge it to be, if he had used the English language, and had said to Peter, Thy name is *Rock*, and upon this *rock*, &c. This method of speaking, by which the same words, or similarly sounding words, are used with a somewhat different signification, was common among the Hebrews; and those who heard Jesus on this occasion, would at once understand him as pointing out Peter. ‖ *I will build my church.* The church of Christ is here compared to an edifice, and Peter to the foundation of the edifice. Here compare Eph. 2: 20. As the foundation is a most important part in respect to an edifice, so Peter was to act a very distinguished part in respect to the church. The history of Peter fully justifies what Jesus thus predicted of him. He became a fearless and successful champion in the cause of Christ. On the day of Pentecost, after the ascension of our Lord, he defended the cause of his Master with singular clearness, and ability, and force of conviction. See Acts 2: 14—47. And when the gospel was to be openly proclaimed to the Gentiles, and thus the cause of Christ was to be rapidly and widely extended, Peter was selected as the distinguished instrument of commencing this great work. In this connection, however, it is obvious, Peter is not called the rock on which the church was to rest, to the exclusion of Christ himself as the foundation. The term, as applied to Peter, must, of course, have a limited meaning. Compared with Christ, he was subordinate (1 Pet. 2: 4—6); compared with other human teachers, even the apostles, he was greatly distinguished. It is *the idea*, contained in this metaphorical language, that should occupy our minds; and not the mere language, taken in all its possibility of extent. ‖ *The gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* The gates of ancient Eastern cities were of great importance. They were necessary to the defence of the cities, which were walled: they were places of much resort, and no little expense was laid out in their erection and furnishing. The gates are sometimes spoken of as representing the whole city, and might be regarded as the seat of power. ‖ *Hell.* The word in the original here employed, is equivalent to our expression, "world of the dead," "state of the departed." *Gates of hell*, then, mean *powers of the lower world.* Satan was regarded as the prince of death (Heb. 2: 14) and when the regions of the dead, or the lower world, were spoken of, particularly in contrast to the powers of righteousness, or the cause of Christ, Satan and his hosts would at once be thought of. The declaration of Christ, then, was, the powers of darkness, Satan and all his hosts of adversaries to my cause, shall never prevail to the subduing or destroying of my church. My church shall be victorious.

19. *The keys.* It was customary among the ancient Hebrews, in families of distinction, for a certain man to have charge of the household affairs as a steward. His office was one of much importance and responsibility. As a token of his office, he

bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

21 From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be

bore a key. In Isaiah 22: 22, is language showing how great dignity was represented by possessing the keys. So in Rev. 1: 18. 3: 7. ‖ *Kingdom of heaven;* the Messiah's establishment, the new dispensation. *The keys of the new dispensation* represent the power of admitting to its privileges. ‖ *Thou shalt bind on earth.* The word translated *bind* properly signifies *forbid, declare unlawful.* ‖ *Shall be bound in heaven;* shall be regarded in heaven as forbidden, or unlawful. That is, Thou shalt be fully qualified and empowered on earth to declare what is unlawful and forbidden in respect to the church, and the salvation of men; and what thou, thus qualified and empowered, shalt pronounce forbidden, shall be so regarded in heaven. There will be perfect harmony between thy decisions and the will of heaven. ‖ *Thou shalt loose;* shalt permit, declare to be right. ‖ *Shall be loosed in heaven;* shall in heaven be regarded as permitted, as right. Thus a promise of full qualification and power was made to Peter, in respect to establishing the cause of Christ, and deciding and making known the fundamental principles of the new dispensation. This full qualification was, doubtless, to be granted after the departure of Christ, and at the time of the descent of the Holy Spirit. The Saviour himself, the Lord of the new dispensation, being then removed from among men, it was necessary that there should be authoritative teachers and guides, who should be Christ's representatives, and whose decisions on matters pertaining to doctrine and duty, should be ultimate, like the decisions of heaven. Peter is here spoken of as one who should be thus qualified and empowered. Nor was Peter alone intended; for he spoke only in the name of his brethren, the apostles, when he declared that Jesus was the Messiah; and to the others, as well as to himself, did the Saviour's language allude. See 18: 18. 23: 8. John 20: 22, 23. While, then, Peter was to sustain a very signal part in establishing the Saviour's cause, he was not to have precedence in point of authority. Accordingly, in the council spoken of in Acts, 15th chapter, it was a decision suggested by James, that was adopted; and on a very remarkable occasion (see Gal. 2: 11), Paul felt himself called upon to rebuke Peter. For Peter, though he knew, and had maintained, the principles of the gospel, had yet, on the occasion referred to, through timidity, acted inconsistently with his avowed principles.

20. *That he was Jesus the Christ.* The word *Jesus,* in this verse, is not found in the best manuscripts of the Greek New Testament, and is believed not to belong to the verse. *The Christ* means *the Messiah.* He *charged his disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Messiah.* Some special reasons, doubtless, existed in the mind of Jesus, for imposing this prohibition at this time. Perhaps he saw that no special advantage would be gained by their publicly speaking of him then as the Messiah. The remarks which he had just made, could not, probably, be apprehended by them in all the fulness and correctness of their meaning; and those remarks might become a ground of some improper representations; for the disciples were not yet, nor for some time after, free from the ordinary expectation of a glorious earthly government to be possessed by the Messiah.

21. *Elders;* distinguished men among the Jews, who were mem-

killed, and be raised again the third day.

22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

23 But he turned and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

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bers of the Sanhedrim, the greatest Jewish tribunal.

22. *Rebuke him;* expressed himself very earnestly, as it were in the way of injunction, in opposition to what Jesus had said. As the time drew near for Jesus to be delivered up to his adversaries, he wished to prepare the minds of his disciples for the event. They had hitherto cherished very different ideas, and it was surprising to them to be informed that the Messiah would be put to death. Peter, with his characteristic ardor, interposed, and, supposing, perhaps, that the language of his Master proceeded from some temporary fear of the Jewish rulers, wished to give him a strong assurance that God would not permit such things to happen to him. The Greek expression for *Be it far from thee*, is, *God be propitious to thee, have mercy on thee;* equivalent to *God forbid.*

23. *Get thee behind me;* remove out of my way, be not an obstacle to me in my path of duty. Jesus wished that nothing should be presented to his own mind, or cherished by others, in opposition to what he knew was the divine plan. ‖ *Satan.* This word, which, with us, is the name of the devil, was doubtless used, in the time of our Lord, with a wider extent of meaning. It is properly a Hebrew word, which means *adversary*, or *evil adviser.* Thus, in 2 Sam. 19:22, the sons of Zeruiah are called "adversaries," that is, evil counsellors. The original Hebrew word for "adversaries," is Satan. So here, the Saviour meant to call Peter an *evil adviser*, for suggesting to his mind a course inconsistent with the will of God, and for expressing himself in a manner which in itself was fitted to turn him away from his appointed course. ‖ *An offence to me;* a stumbling-block. Peter's remark was unpleasant to Jesus, because it was so contrary to what Jesus foreknew, and because, if acted on, it would be an occasion of sin. ‖ *Thou savorest not;* thou dost not relish, or delight in. This sufficiently well expresses the meaning of the original. It might be more fully expressed thus: Thy views and feelings on this point, or thy sentiments and disposition, do not accord with God's, but with men's. Peter spoke like one who was anticipating worldly prosperity and human favor, and who had placed his hopes on worldly grandeur, to be acquired by the Messiah, rather than on the great spiritual blessings which were to result from the Messiah's coming.

24. Having had so affecting a manifestation of the low and earthly views of the disciples, and of their need of a deeper spirit of self-denial, Jesus proceeded to show them what temper of mind it was necessary for one to possess, who would be truly his disciple. *Will come after me;* wishes to be my disciple. ‖ *Take up his cross.* The cross was an instrument of severe and ignominious capital punishment, inflicted by the Romans on servants, on robbers, assassins, and rebels. It was introduced among the Jews from the Romans. A person condemned to this mode of punishment, was also compelled to carry his cross to the place of execution. *To take up the cross*, then, is to go forth to severe and ignominious sufferings, even to the enduring of death in most painful and shameful forms. The meaning of the Saviour is, that a dis-

25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

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ciple of his must hold himself ready to bear, out of regard to him, any sort and any extent of suffering and shame. ‖ *Follow me.* Jesus had been reviled, and was yet to be more reviled, and to suffer extreme anguish. His disciples must possess the same spirit, and be willing, in the way of suffering, to follow a suffering Master.

25. *Will save his life.* In this connection, the word *life* is used in a twofold signification; namely, as referring to mortal life and to immortal life; to life here and to life hereafter. ‖ *Shall lose it;* that is, his life. Whoever, in times of trouble respecting the cause of the Messiah, shall timidly shrink from avowing attachment to me, and, in order to escape death, and to preserve his life, shall decline to follow me, will yet lose his life, that is, in the higher sense. Though he may save his life here, yet he will, by such a course, lose it hereafter. And, on the other hand, he who hazards, or loses, his life here, in consequence of his being my disciple, shall secure it hereafter, that is, shall have his soul saved, shall secure immortal life.

26. The Saviour then encouraged his disciples to the endurance of trials, by directing their thoughts to the life hereafter, as immensely outweighing all objects that might appear valuable on earth. *His own soul.* In the original, *his own life*, just as in the preceding verse. The language of this verse was probably proverbial, and capable of being applied either to the life here or to the life hereafter, as the connection would indicate. It would indeed be a poor bargain to gain this world at the expense of losing our mortal life; for what recompense should we then enjoy for all our toil? But how much worse to lose our life hereafter, by the endeavor to gain the present world! Doubtless the Saviour had in mind the loss of eternal life. ‖ *What shall* [can] *a man give in exchange for his soul?* What can a man give in order to have his life restored to him, when once it is lost? Such an inquiry may be applied either to this life or to the life which is to come. Of course, the immediate reference of the Saviour was to the life hereafter.

27. *For the Son of man shall come,* &c. Compare 25: 31. The Saviour referred to the final judgment. ‖ *In the glory of his Father;* in divine majesty, with the power of God, in supreme power. Since there is to be a day of judgment, in which every man will receive a recompense according to his deeds, how important that we should act with habitual reference to it, and not be induced, by temptations and sufferings on earth, in the cause of Christ, to decline following him! Such was the Saviour's idea; and it clearly shows that, in the preceding verses, he was speaking of *the life hereafter* as in danger of being lost, by a solicitude to save *the life here.*

As parallel with Matt. 16: 21—28, see Mark 8: 31—38. Luke 9: 22—27.

Remark. The solemn cautions of our Saviour, though peculiarly needed by the disciples to whom they were first addressed, will be applicable in all ages. His religion remains the same, and the hearts of men are the same, as when he was on earth. Different outward circumstances increase or diminish the dangers to our spiritual welfare.

Consider, 1. In matters of religion, our own judgment and feelings must not be made a standard. The

28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.

CHAPTER XVII.

AND after six days, Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain, apart,

2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.

3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.

4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

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will of God must govern, and we ought cheerfully to conform to his will. It is not according to the plan of God, that worldly greatness shall be sought or expected by his people. vs. 22, 23.

2. Self-denial is essential to being a disciple of Christ. The spirit of self-denial, proceeding from love to Christ, and supreme regard to his authority, is to have no limits; we must be ready to sacrifice even our lives, rather than be willing to renounce him. v. 24.

3. We ought always to act in view of the final judgment, and the eternal state of men. Such a view will diminish the power of temptation, and arm us with vigor in the endurance of trials.

4. How valuable is the soul! Every thing ought to be hazarded, every thing ought to be endured, rather than to lose our souls.

28. *Taste of death;* die. || *Coming in his kingdom;* in his royalty, as the King Messiah, in the manifestation of glorious power. This manifestation was to occur during the lifetime of some who were then present. Our minds are hence directed to the destruction of Jerusalem and the termination of the Jewish state, which occurred between thirty and forty years from this time; and which operated signally to the establishment and spread of Christianity.

CHAPTER XVII.

1. *A high mountain.* The name of the mountain spoken of is not known. It has frequently been supposed to be Tabor, but without sufficient authority. In the preceding chapter (v. 13), we read of Jesus being near to Cesarea Philippi. The mountain might have been in the neighborhood of that city. To that mountain Jesus had retired for prayer. See Luke 9: 28.

2. *Transfigured;* underwent a remarkable change in his appearance, as is expressed in the following words of the verse.

3. *Elias;* the prophet Elijah. The conversation of Moses and Elijah with Jesus was, according to Luke 9: 31, respecting his death, which was soon to occur at Jerusalem. The interview with those long since departed saints must have been refreshing to the mind of Jesus, in view of his anticipated sufferings. Even he would be consoled and strengthened by a visit from those who, like himself, had come on divine errands to men, and who could so deeply sympathize with him, both in respect to his sorrows and in respect to the glory that should follow.

4. *Tabernacles;* booths, made mostly of branches of trees. Mark (9: 6) and Luke (9: 33) say, that Peter knew not what he was saying. The disciples were taken by surprise; and without stopping calmly to reflect, Peter gave utterance to his first emotions. When under the first influence of sudden astonishment, a person often scarcely knows what he says. Besides,

5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and, behold, a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: hear ye him.

6 And when the disciples heard *it*, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.

7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.

8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.

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the disciples were scarcely awakened from sleep. Luke 9: 32.

5. *A bright cloud overshadowed them.* The splendor that was reflected from the cloud probably overspread the whole company; but from the language in the original of Luke 9: 34, it would seem, that the heavenly visitants entered into the body of the cloud; and that from within the cloud, in the hearing of the disciples without, proceeded the sound of the words, This is my beloved Son, &c. ‖ *I am well pleased.* It was in immediate connection with conversation respecting the death of Jesus, that this declaration was made. Compare, here, John 10: 17.

6. *Sore afraid;* exceedingly afraid. Such an unusual manifestation filled them with amazement and dread.

9. *Tell the vision to no man.* The people were not yet sufficiently informed respecting the true nature of the Messiah's reign, to be told of what had taken place. They would probably have made a wrong use of it, regarding it as a signal that the Messiah's glorious earthly reign had commenced, and therefore holding themselves in readiness to engage in civil disturbances. Nor were the disciples as yet so free from the expectation of an earthly reign, as to be qualified to speak publicly on the event which had occurred. ‖ *Until the Son of man be risen,* &c. From Mark 9: 10, it appears, that the disciples did not know how to understand what Jesus said respecting "rising from the dead." Like the Jews, in general, they were laboring under much ignorance and misapprehension respecting the Messiah; but Jesus was gradually preparing them for what was to take place. As parallel passages, read Mark 9: 2—10. Luke 9: 28—36.

The scene on the mount of transfiguration made a very deep impression on the disciples who witnessed it. After the Saviour's ascension, and when, by the descent of the Holy Spirit, they were fully enlightened and fitted for their work, they doubtless regarded this scene as one of exceeding interest and importance. See 2 Pet. 1: 16—18. That what took place on the mount was no illusion, but a solemn reality, and was an event of no ordinary magnitude in the life of Jesus, is manifest from the allusion to it which Peter makes in the passage referred to.

Remark. We must not fail to notice here, that the glorious scene on the mount took place in connection with prayer. God is peculiarly near to us, when we are sincerely and solemnly engaged in prayer. He often manifests himself to the soul, shedding abroad his love, imparting glorious views of his own character and of heaven, strengthening us for the endurance of trials, and preparing us for unexpected events, whether of sorrow or of joy. When we are anticipating events adapted to try our faith and patience, not only is special prayer seasonable, but we are encouraged to hope that God will make special manifestations of his love and power, and prepare us to pass through our trials

10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes, that Elias must first come?

11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things:

12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed: likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.

14 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a *certain* man kneeling down to him, and saying,

15 Lord, have mercy on my son; for he is lunatic, and sore vexed, for ofttimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.

16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.

17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him hither to me.

18 And Jesus rebuked the devil, and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.

19 Then came the disciples to Jesus, apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you,

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in such a manner as will adorn religion and render us useful.

10. *Why then, &c.* Elias, that is, Elijah, had just made his appearance to Jesus; and Jesus had forbidden the disciples to say any thing on the subject. It was a common opinion, taught by the scribes, that Elijah, the ancient prophet, was to appear and give assistance to the Messiah. 11: 14. 16: 14. Since he had now appeared, the disciples may have thought, that this was, in part at least, the appearing which was expected; but as they were forbidden to say any thing publicly about it, they could not well reconcile this prohibition with the received doctrine. Hence they asked, *Why then* say the scribes? Are they right or wrong in this opinion?

11. *Elias truly shall first come;* that is, it is indeed according to the divine plan that Elias should precede the Messiah. Mal. 4: 5. ‖ *Restore all things;* bring back the former state of things. The Jews, in general, cherished the opinion, that, in connection with the coming of Elijah, there would be a renewal of the Jewish commonwealth, or a restoration to its former power and splendor. The right view was, that the expected Elias would be sent to effect a radical reformation among the people, and thus to restore such a righteous state of things as existed in the purest ages of the nation.

12. *Knew him not;* they knew not John the Baptist as the predicted Elias. They recognized him not in his true character, nor did justice to him. Compare Mark 9: 11—13. ‖ *They listed;* they chose.

15. *Lunatic.* See on 4: 24.

17. *Faithless and perverse generation;* an exclamation which was applicable to all the company, more or less, and was intended to convey a rebuke both to the disciples and to the multitude.

20. *Because of your unbelief.* From

If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence, to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

21 Howbeit, this kind goeth not out, but by prayer and fasting.

22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:

23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.

24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute-*money*, came to Peter, and said, Doth not your Master pay tribute?

25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?

Mark 9: 14, we learn that the scribes had been disputing with the disciples during the absence of their Master. It is likely that the scribes were disputing in reference to Jesus, and to the power of working miracles; and by casting suspicions and surmises, and suggesting doubts, they had produced a distrustful state of mind in the disciples. One who believes the truth may have his mind shaken for a time by hearkening to objections, especially if skilfully and slyly presented. ‖ *As a grain of mustard seed;* that is, a very small degree of faith. The mustard seed was regarded as the smallest of seeds. See 13: 32. ‖ *Nothing shall be impossible;* by cherishing a steadfast faith, you will be able to accomplish any miracles which your official station requires; you will never be foiled.

21. *By prayer and fasting.* By such religious exercises, love to God and confidence in his promises would be greatly increased; and only to so strong a faith as would be nourished by such religious exercises, would this species of adversaries, would these *demons* yield. Mark (9: 14—29) gives an account of this transaction more particular and highly interesting, especially as developing the feelings of the anxious father, and showing the high value of faith in order to the reception of blessings. Compare, also, Luke 9: 37—43.

Remark. By keeping our minds habitually directed to the promises of God, rather than to any difficulties which may beset us, our faith will become stronger, our happiness more abiding, and our ability to be useful much greater. v. 20.

22, 23. Mark observes (9: 30) that Jesus at this time purposely kept himself from the multitude. He was wishing to prepare the minds of his disciples for the trying events which were soon to occur. Compare Mark 9: 30—32. Luke 9: 43—45.

24. *They that receive tribute.* The tribute here spoken of was the yearly payment of a half shekel from every adult Jew, for the support of the temple, originating from the requisition in Ex. 30: 12—16. The Greek word here rendered *tribute*, is the name of a coin equal to a Jewish half shekel, and amounting to about twenty-eight cents of our money. ‖ *Doth not your Master pay tribute?* It has been supposed, though there is no positive evidence, that the religious teachers among the Jews were exempted from this tax, but that they usually paid it, as a proof of their regard for religion.

25. *Jesus prevented him;* that is, anticipated him, commenced speaking on the subject before Peter had time to inform him of the question that had been proposed. The word *prevent*, in the Bible, means *to be before, to go be-*

26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up: and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AT the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

4 Whosoever, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5 And whoso shall receive

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fore, or *to anticipate*. ‖ *Of their own children, or of strangers?* that is, from members of their own family, from their own sons, or from persons not belonging to the family?

26. On the principle just acknowledged, then, a king's sons would be regarded as free from the taxes which were required for the support of the king and his household. Now, the temple was the house of God, the great King; and the half shekel tax was devoted to the support of the temple, and professedly to the honor of the great King. Jesus was this King's son; of him, then, the tax ought not, on the principle above stated, to be demanded.

27. *Should offend them;* should give them occasion to speak reproachfully and sinfully. ‖ *A piece of money;* in the original, a stater, the name of a coin equivalent to a shekel. It is well to observe, that in all matters pertaining to the ordinary duties of a citizen, Jesus wished to be blameless. Even exactions which had become grossly perverted, he did not resist, from a regard to peace and blamelessness. He was establishing a religion which would work a silent cure for all evils; and without attacking all the improprieties which existed, he enforced principles which would ultimately correct them.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. *At the same time.* Reference may be had to the time of the event just related. In Mark 9: 33, mention is made of the disciples having conversed *on the way*, that is, to Capernaum, where they now were. ‖ *Came the disciples to Jesus.* According to Mark 9: 33, &c., the question mentioned by Matthew was discussed among the disciples while they were on the way; and when they had come into the house, Jesus inquired of them what they had been disputing about. But they held their peace. Probably, after remaining silent a short time, they came up to Jesus, as Matthew relates, and proposed the question, *Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?* They meant, Who shall have the principal honors, the chief offices, in the Messiah's earthly government? Perhaps the remarks of Jesus to Peter, in 16: 18, 19, and his having taken Peter, James, and John, apart, 17: 1, gave rise to this inquiry.

3. *Except ye be converted;* turned from this worldly, aspiring disposition. ‖ *Become as little children;* not aspiring, seeking for great things, but modest, humble. ‖ *Ye shall not enter*, &c.; ye shall not be regarded as belonging to the Messiah's kingdom.

4. *Greatest*, &c. True humility is the ground on which the blessings and rewards of the divine kingdom will be

one such little child in my name, receiveth me.

6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

7 Woe unto the world, because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh:

8 Wherefore, if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire.

9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.

10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father, which is in heaven.

11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

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distributed. To be little in your own eyes is the way to be great in the esteem of the Messiah.

5. *In my name;* on my account, as my disciple. By comparing the parallel passage in Mark 9: 38, it will appear, that the conversation between Jesus and the disciples now took a different turn. Mark relates that just at this point, John recollected an event which had lately occurred. Some of the disciples had met with a man who was casting out demons in the name of the Messiah; and because he was not of their company, and did not follow them, they endeavored to restrain him. Jesus disapproved of their conduct, and took occasion from this circumstance to explain how they ought to feel and to act towards all who acknowledged him.

6. *Offend;* cast a stumbling-block in the way; treat one so as to alienate him from me. ‖ *These little ones;* an expression equivalent to *disciples.* See on 10: 42. Reference is had here not to age, but to the relation sustained to the Messiah as *the great Teacher; little ones* being the contrasted term; as *disciples* are contrasted with *Teacher.*

7. *Offences;* occasions of sin and departure from Christ, stumbling-blocks.

8, 9. Compare 5: 29, 30. As parallel passages relating to what is contained in Matt. 18: 1—9, see Mark 9: 33—50. Luke 9. 46—48.

10. Jesus proceeded to show more at large the temper of mind which should be cherished towards his disciples, and mentioned some reasons why they should be treated with much affection. *Despise;* disesteem, undervalue. ‖ *Their angels.* Compare Heb. 1: 14. Angels in heaven are represented as feeling a deep interest in the repentance and salvation of a sinner. See Luke 15: 7, 10. Here they are said to behold the face of God, that is, to stand in his presence, ready to obey any order which he may give in respect to the welfare of the righteous. This is the first consideration enforcing a benevolent regard for the disciples of Christ; namely, they are objects of divine care, and angels, who are appointed as ministering spirits to them, are always ready to perform the will of God in respect to them.

11. Another reason Jesus presented for cherishing a very kind regard for the disciples; namely, the Mes-

12 How think ye? If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

15 Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall

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siah himself came on earth in order to save them. In their welfare, then, what an interest does the Messiah cherish! He looks upon them as those who were wandering and lost, and whom he came to search for and to deliver from their danger.

12, 13. *Astray.* The disciples of Jesus, regarded as those who had wandered away from duty and bliss, but who had been sought after and reclaimed, are on this very account objects of deep interest to the Messiah. This thought he illustrated by the feeling which a shepherd would cherish towards a sheep that had wandered from the fold, and had become lost, and which, after much anxiety and care, he had found and brought back. Such an unhappy sheep, thus rescued and restored, would, while the remembrance of this fact was present to the mind of the shepherd, be contemplated with a more lively interest than a whole flock that had not been thus exposed. So Jesus, having rescued and restored his disciples from their former sinful and dangerous condition, feels a very peculiar interest in them.

14. As in the case supposed, the rescuing of the lost sheep was the object to be gained, so in the case of the Saviour's disciples, God has purposed that they shall not be lost. And if he has formed such a design respecting them, surely *we* ought not (v. 10) *to despise*, to undervalue them.

Remarks. 1. Jesus always discountenanced an ambitious, aspiring disposition. He encouraged the pursuit of moral excellence, but not the seeking after great earthly distinctions. Compare Jer. 45: 5. 1 Tim. 6: 9.

2. Humility is the best recommendation to the divine favor. v. 4. Compare Luke 14: 11. James 4: 6.

3. The condescension of Christ is great in regarding any disciple as a representative of himself. v. 5. Compare Matt. 10: 42.

4. To be the means of leading a Christian to do wrong, is an offence of no ordinary magnitude. v. 6.

5. Any inconvenience ought to be submitted to, rather than to be drawn atsray to the commission of sin. vs. 7—9.

6. We ought to cherish a very high esteem for the followers of Christ, however lowly their situation, or mean their garb, or depressed in understanding and outward circumstances. vs. 10—14. Compare John 15: 12. 13: 34, 35. 1 John 3: 14.

15. The cautions respecting the high regard which we ought to cherish towards the disciples of Christ, were followed by directions how to regulate our conduct, if a Christian brother should do us wrong. *Hear thee;* hear so as to yield to thy representations, and return to his duty. ‖ *Gained thy brother.* A person who lives in sin, *is lost* in respect to his eternal welfare; if he be recovered from sin, he experiences great *gain*, and *is gained*, that is, recovered and saved by the instrumentality of him who brings him back to obedience. The one who thus brings him back,

hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

16 But if he will not hear *thee, then* take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.

17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell *it* unto the church; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican.

18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.

19 Again, I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father, which is in heaven.

20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

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gains him, *saves* him from being lost. Compare James 5: 20. 1 Pet. 3: 1. 1 Cor. 7: 16. 9: 19—22.

16. *Two or three witnesses, &c.* A rule similar in its import was binding on the Jews. Compare Deut. 19: 15.

17. *The church;* the company of believers with which the offender is connected. ‖*As a heathen man and a publican.* The Jews did not encourage intimacy with the heathen, that is, with Gentiles, and publicans (see on 5: 47) they regarded as unworthy of their society. An offender, then, who would not hearken, in a private conversation, to reasonable suggestions, nor listen, when two or three witnesses were present, nor comply with the directions of the church, was no longer to be kept in familiar intimacy as a Christian, but was to be removed from the company of Christians, as unsuitable for Christians to associate with. Jesus, however, unlike the Jewish teachers, does not permit us to *hate* those who are thus separated. See 5: 44—48.

18. Compare 16: 19. The difference between this verse and the one referred to, is, that in this verse the words of Christ are manifestly addressed to all the apostles, giving them all alike full authority in respect to the church, as his representatives. His followers were to look to them as guides fully qualified and empowered.

19 Sustaining this important relation to the church, they would need special direction from heaven. This the Saviour promised they should receive, in answer to prayer. *If two of you shall agree.* It was not necessary that the whole company should always be together in order to consult and pray; if only two should unite in seeking a knowledge of the divine will, their prayer would be heard, and whatsoever they should ask for, as connected with their official capacity, they should receive it.

20. *Where two or three, &c.* If any of the apostles had met *in the name of Christ*, that is, with reference to his cause, to consult on a matter which involved his glory, Christ himself would be spiritually present with them, and communicate to their minds a knowledge of his will.

Reflections. 1. There is great wisdom and kindness in the rule requiring a private interview with a Christian brother who may have done us wrong. Little success could be anticipated, if we should at first converse with him in the presence of others. Men have such a regard to false honor, and are so unwilling to acknowledge that they have done wrong, when their reputation is at stake, that the utmost secrecy ought to be sought in matters of this kind. Reproof is unwelcome to one who deserves it; and all outward circumstances which might unpleasantly

21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?

22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.

23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king which would take account of his servants.

24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him which owed him ten thousand talents.

25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.

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affect his mind ought to be avoided. v. 15.

2. We have much encouragement to seek the return of an offending brother to his duty. We may be the means of saving him. v. 15. Compare James 5: 19, 20.

3. United prayer has great encouragement. v. 19. Our Lord's representations concerning the efficacy of prayer do, however, give no encouragement to any wild and extravagant petitions; for while we pray to our heavenly Father, whose heart is full of tenderness, we must remember that he has all knowledge, and that his promise does not have respect to any improper fancies of men, but to petitions conformed to what he sees is right and suitable; just as an earthly father, who gives the fullest encouragement to his son to ask for favors, does not thereby give up his right to discriminate and to judge respecting the desires presented.

4. If we habitually cherish a regard to the honor of our Saviour, we may indulge also the cheering confidence that he is ever with us (v. 20); particularly when united with others in employments and consultations pertaining to the advancement of his cause.

21. *Then came Peter.* The instructions of the Saviour respecting the treatment of persons who have done others wrong, suggested an inquiry which Peter wished to make.

22. *Until seventy times seven.* Let there be no limit to the exercise of a forgiving temper. The number *seven* was used as a sort of round number, like our word *ten*. The mention of seven led the Saviour to adopt this peculiar way of answering the question. Compare Luke 17: 3, 4.

23. To illustrate the principle of forgiving injuries, and to show the consequences of an opposite spirit, Jesus proceeded to speak a parable. *The kingdom of heaven;* the Messiah's dispensation. The manner in which the forgiveness of injuries is regarded in this dispensation, may be illustrated by the conduct of a certain king. ‖ *Servants;* not domestic servants, or slaves; but *officers*. The person spoken of is *a king;* royal officers are sometimes called *servants*. See on 14: 2. ‖ *Take account;* call to a reckoning, inquire into their management of affairs.

24. *Ten thousand talents.* The value of the talent may be stated at about a thousand dollars. The amount here mentioned would then be ten millions of dollars. The design of the Saviour was, to present a debt of an indefinitely large amount, as contrasted with a very small debt, and thus to show the weight of obligation when lenity had been exercised towards such a debtor. Besides, the property of private individuals, who were in royal favor and royal employ, was frequently enormous in Eastern countries. Even if so large a debt were an improbable supposition, it yet was adapted to the Saviour's design; namely, to represent a signal case of kindness towards a dependant.

25. *Commanded him to be sold, and*

26 The servant, therefore, fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.

28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellow-servants, which owed him a hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took *him* by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.

29 And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31 So when his fellow-servants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.

32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:

33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?

34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.

35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

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his wife, &c. This circumstance was in accordance with Jewish ideas and manners. See Lev. 25: 39. 2 Kings 4: 1. Amos 8: 6. Oriental kings had absolute power over the persons and property of their subjects.

26. *Worshipped;* performed special homage.

28. *Fellow-servants;* fellow-officers under the king. ‖ *A hundred pence.* The word rendered *pence* expresses a coin equal to about ten or twelve cents of our money; a trifling sum, indeed, ten or twelve dollars, when compared with his own debt to the king!

34. *Tormentors;* probably the keepers of the prison. The king, having absolute power, recalled his act of remitting the debt, and enforced his original claim.

35. *So likewise.* In this verse we have the application of the parable. If we do not forgive those who do us wrong, our heavenly Father will not forgive us our sins against him, but will condemn us to all the severity of punishment that our sins deserve. Compare 6: 12.

How powerful is the consideration exhibited in this parable to enforce a Christian's exercise of the spirit of forgiveness! He has himself received forgiveness from God, of offences unspeakably more numerous and more aggravated than can possibly be committed against himself by any human being. The remembrance of his own sinfulness, and of the unspeakable kindness of God towards him, ought to excite compassion and forgiveness in respect to those who have done him wrong. If such a spirit be not possessed, can it be, that the person has ever been made acquainted with his own heart, and has ever experienced the pardoning mercy of God? If he have not the spirit of forgiveness, is he not wholly destitute of that temper which is suitable to one who needs forgiveness from God? Does he possess that temper which would render it suitable that his sins should be forgiven? The spirit of heaven is a spirit of love; an unforgiving temper can have no abode there.

CHAPTER XIX.

AND it came to pass, *that* when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judea, beyond Jordan:

2 And great multitudes followed him, and he healed them there.

3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?

4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning, made them male and female,

5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?

8 He saith unto them, Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.

CHAPTER XIX.

1. *Galilee;* the country in the north of Palestine. || *Coasts of Judea;* the territory bordering on Judea, at the south part of the land. || *Beyond Jordan;* on the eastern side of the river Jordan.

3. *To put away;* to divorce. || *For every cause;* for any thing whatever that may displease him.

4. *Male and female;* or, a male and a female.

5. See Gen. 2: 24. *Twain;* an obsolete word, meaning *two.*

6. *One flesh;* that is, so to speak, one person in affection, in interests and pursuits. || *Let not man put asunder.* God appointed the marriage bond to be a permanent one; let not man presume, without divine authority, to break it.

7. *Why did Moses then,* &c. Having thus heard the decision of Jesus, that, since marriage had been established and regulated by divine authority, man ought not to assume the power of sundering the marriage bond, the Pharisees objected that Moses had given the Jews permission to put away their wives by giving the wife a bill of divorcement. Thus the authority of Moses seemed to be arrayed against that of Jesus. The statute of Moses, on this subject, may be seen in Deut. 24: 1. The expressions used by Moses were not so definite as to prevent inquiry and difference of opinion concerning what would be a just cause for a divorce. There were consequently two parties among the Jews on this question; one contending that only the guilt of adultery was an adequate cause for divorcing one's wife; the other, that any thing which made a person displeased with his wife, was a sufficient cause. It was in view of this contested question that the Pharisees wished to learn the opinion of Jesus. He let them know very distinctly that the marriage bond was intended by the Creator to be a permanent one; and that man ought not to assume the power of breaking it.

8. *Moses suffered you,* &c. Jesus acknowledged that Moses had given them liberty to put away their wives; but declared that this arrangement, sanctioned by Moses, was not an original one, established at the first by the Creator. It was only a prudential arrangement, to meet the intractable disposition of the Jews. When Mo-

9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except *it be* for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away, doth commit adultery.

10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with *his* wife, it is not good to marry.

ses established his institutes, the Jews had already been in the habit of improper conduct on this point; and such was their character, that a due regard to his office as a civil (not a moral) legislator, made him endeavor rather to prevent abuses of what had been regarded as a privilege, than to prescribe the strict rule of equity, according to the original divine arrangement. The statutes of Moses were, to a great extent, to be regarded as civil statutes, adapted to the existing state of things in the nation, rather than as moral precepts, declaring, simply and fully, rules of action to regulate the conscience in the sight of God. The distinction between a *moral* precept, enjoining a principle of perfect right in the sight of God, and a *civil* statute, regulating a person's conduct as a citizen of a civil community, not as a creature of God, was overlooked by the Pharisees, but is here exhibited by our Lord; as if he had said, Moses was legislating in reference to the civil community, and in reference to your conduct, as members of the civil community; and, knowing your intractable disposition [hardness of heart], and foreseeing that, if he had at once entirely prohibited the practice of divorcing wives, worse consequences would ensue, by reason of your character, than if he only endeavored to regulate the matter by restraining abuses, and appointing the order of proceeding in this case, so that it should not be arbitrary,—he did, in these circumstances, and in this view, permit divorces; not, however, that he approved of such conduct, when viewed in a moral light, nor that God approved of sundering the marriage bond.

This distinction between a *moral* precept proceeding from God, and binding the conscience in respect to Him, and a *civil* statute, proceeding from a legislator, and regulating the conduct of citizens as citizens merely, will be apprehended, by considering that human legislation is necessarily imperfect, and that it must have regard to an existing state of things, and not solely to abstract principles; and that, frequently, a thing may not be unlawful, so far as the civil laws are concerned, while it yet may contravene the laws of God; and that a thing may be forbidden by human law, which may yet be required by the perfectly right principles of divine law. And though Moses was divinely commissioned to make his statutes, yet his commission regarded him, to a great extent, as making a code of civil statutes, which must, therefore, partake of the nature of civil statutes established by other legislators.

9. *And I say unto you*, &c. By comparing the parallel passage in Mark 10: 10, 11, it will appear that the conversation with the Pharisees had terminated with the eighth verse. He replied to their inquiry, and answered their objections. After retiring to a house, his disciples resumed the subject; and Jesus proceeded to instruct them further in relation to it. || *Whosoever shall put away*, &c. Compare 5: 31, 32. In Mark 10: 12, the rule is stated as applicable also to the woman. The parallel passage in Mark is 10: 1—12.

10. *It is not good to marry.* That is, if nothing but adultery be a just cause for divorce, it would be best not to marry. If a man be regarded as bound to his wife for life, however displeasing to him may be the connection, and if no unpleasant circum-

11 But he said unto them, All *men* cannot receive this saying, save *they* to whom it is given.

12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from *their* mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive *it*, let him receive *it*.

13 Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put *his* hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.

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stances, short of the crime specified by the Saviour, can justify the sundering of the bond, it would be well not to enter into the state of marriage. The disciples spoke thus, under the influence of notions and practices that prevailed among the Jews. The true view of the marriage state was not commonly entertained among them; and nearly all were in the habit of regarding a person's supposed convenience as sufficient to justify a divorce. Having grown up in the midst of practices proceeding from such a sentiment, it is not to be wondered at, that the disciples hastily spoke of the marriage state, as represented by Jesus, rather in the light of an uncomfortable restraint, a species of bondage, which it would be well to avoid.

11, 12. *All men cannot receive this saying.* The remark which the disciples had made, the Saviour said, is contrary to the nature of man; and there are but few in reference to whom their remark can properly be made. In reference to the great mass of men, the marriage state grows out of the very principles and propensities implanted in their nature by the Creator. Still there are individual cases of exception, and if a person has reason to regard himself as among these cases of exception, and is, in a judicious manner, disposed to act on the saying of the disciples, he is at liberty so to do. ‖ *For the kingdom of heaven's sake;* that is, as we say, for the sake of the cause of Christ, for the promotion of true religion. 1 Cor. 7: 32. The chapter in the Epistle just referred to, may be profitably read in this connection.

Remark. We see the happy influence of the gospel on the marriage relation. It has brought back the institution to its original state and design. It defends the rights and privileges of wives as well as of husbands. By the experience of Christian countries, as contrasted with other countries, it is also shown that the original character of the institution, thus restored by the gospel, is most happily adapted to the moral improvement and happiness of the human race; and that a departure from this original character is fraught with evils, personal, domestic, and civil. How grossly do persons offend against the best interests of the human race, who in any way disparage the institution of marriage, or slight the restraints and the privileges for which the Creator intended marriage!

13. *Little children.* The term is a general one, not pointing out children of any particular age. In Mark 10: 13, the expression is, *young children;* but in the original, the word is the same as in Matthew. In Luke 18: 15, we read, "they brought unto him also *infants.*" There a different word is used. It is, however, a word not restricted to the period of infancy, as appears from examining 2 Tim. 3: 15, "*from a child* thou hast known the holy Scriptures;" the word translated *child*, in the Epistle to Timothy, being the same as that which is translated *infants* in Luke. ‖ *Brought un-*

14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.

15 And he laid *his* hands on them, and departed thence.

16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Mas-

to him. The word *bring* is, in ordinary use, applied to children who walk by our side, as well as those who are carried in the arms. It is not important for us, in order to understand this passage, or for any practical purposes, to know of what age these children were. They were children of a tender age. ‖ *That he should put his hands on them.* The laying of hands on a person was significant of pronouncing on him, or seeking for him, a blessing. See Gen. 48: 14. Matt. 9: 18. Mark 16: 18. ‖ *And pray;* pray for a blessing on the children. The Jews, from the earliest period, thought very highly of such an act, performed by a venerable and pious man, especially a prophet, or a religious teacher. They believed that blessings thus pronounced would be efficacious as to the future welfare of children. A benediction pronounced by Jesus, and prayer for the children by him, were sought on the occasion here spoken of. ‖ *The disciples rebuked them;* that is, those who brought the children. The disciples, perhaps, wished to continue their inquiries on the subject of which they had just been speaking; and they regarded it as quite unsuitable, that for the sake of little children, and for merely gratifying the feelings of some parents, they should be interrupted in the midst of an important conversation.

14. *For of such is the kingdom of heaven;* of persons resembling little children, that is, in their prevalent traits of character, love and submission to parents, and modest, humble temper. See 18: 3. That the Saviour spoke of the childlike disposition, as that required in the new dispensation, and not of children, as children, being actually included in the number of his people, is obvious from the manner in which Mark (10: 15) and Luke (18: 17) speak on this very occasion. *The kingdom of heaven* here means the Messiah's dispensation; and the sentiment uttered by our Lord is, that the spirit of little children is that which must be possessed by his disciples; that without this spirit no one can enjoy the blessings of his dispensation. How suitable, then, that he should regard with peculiar fondness, little children brought to him for his benediction!

15. *He laid his hands on them.* Mark (10: 16) adds, "he took them up in his arms, and blessed them." Examine, as parallel passages, Mark 10: 13—16. Luke 18: 15—17.

Notice the condescension of Jesus. He honored the promptings of natural affection in those who sought his blessing in behalf of their children. He did not treat children as unworthy of his regard, but looked on them with pleasure, as manifesting some of the lovely traits of character which true religion inspires. See 1 Cor. 14: 20. He also knew how to estimate the value of good impressions made on the heart at an early period, and would not miss an opportunity of doing good, which those children might remember for years. A worthy example for us. Let us highly prize the simplicity and modesty of childhood, beware of neglecting "little ones," for whom the Saviour showed a tender regard, and feel that time spent in seeking the welfare of children is well bestowed. Let us examine whether we have a childlike disposition towards God; humble, submissive to his will, feeling towards him as the author of all our mercies.

16. *One came.* From the 20th verse, we learn that he was a young man. From Luke 18: 18, we also learn that he was *a ruler;* what office, if any, he sustained, we are not informed. The word *ruler* was ap-

ter, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?

17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good but one, *that is*, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.

18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,

19 Honor thy father and *thy* mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?

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plicable to the rulers of synagogues, to the members of the Sanhedrim, and to other persons of distinction. ‖ *Good Master*. The Pharisees were fond of being addressed by such titles, for they made pretensions to high moral worth, and to eminence as religious teachers. The word rendered *master*, properly means *teacher*. This young man addressed the Saviour with the same pompous title that he would have used in speaking to a Jewish doctor of the law. ‖ *What good thing shall I do?* He seems to have thought that some particular act or acts of obedience were preëminently pleasing to God, so as to secure his regard. He did not think of the state of the heart, as what God looks at. This tendency of his mind was cherished, if not produced, by the doctrine of the Pharisees, that some of the commands of God are light, and can be dispensed with; while others are of a more weighty character, and must not be disregarded, the performance of which will certainly secure to man his favor. What are the particular things, then, the young man asked, which you consider as of so weighty a character as to secure the blessing of eternal happiness? On the division of the divine commands into important and unimportant, see 5: 19; also 22: 36.

17. *Why callest thou me good?* The young man had addressed the Saviour as a religious teacher, or Rabbi; and given him such a title as the doctors of the law and others, in their vain glory, were glad to receive. Jesus disapproved of applying such an epithet, in its proper meaning, to any but to God; and hence it ought not to be applied to one who is acknowledged only as a religious teacher. He wished, too, to make a marked difference between himself and the haughty Pharisees. The true character of Jesus was not known by this man; and the epithet which he employed was only intended as a flattering or respectful term, such as was customary in addressing the Rabbins. ‖ *Into life;* eternal life. ‖ *Keep the commandments*. The Saviour shaped his reply in such a manner as ultimately to expose to the young man's own view his deficiencies, and his need of something for salvation different from what he had heretofore supposed. At the same time, he exhibited the true principle which regulates the bestowal of divine favor. Obedience to God's commands, unfailing and universal, will secure his approbation. This rule is, indeed, properly speaking, applicable only to those who have never sinned. Still, it is a true principle, to the spirit of which faith in the Saviour brings us; and the statement of which, in the case of the young ruler, was most happily adapted to lead him to a conviction of his being utterly deficient in the sight of God.

18, 19. Compare Ex. 20: 12—16. Lev. 19: 18. The Saviour either mentioned these commandments as specimens of all the commands of God, or as sufficiently adapted, though relating only to duties between man and man, to detect the deficiency of the young man's righteousness.

20. *What lack I yet?* what deficiency yet remains? what thing

21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go *and* sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come *and* follow me.

22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.

23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.

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yet is there which I must perform, so as to complete the whole circle of duty?

21. *If thou wilt be perfect;* that is, complete in every respect; if thou wilt be without deficiency. The word *perfect*, as used by the Saviour, was meant to meet the inquiry, What *lack* I, what *deficiency* still remains? ‖ *Go and sell that thou hast, &c.*; dispose of thy earthly possessions for the benefit of the suffering; cherish the spirit of impartial love to thy fellow-men, and of the renunciation of earthly good. Compare Luke 11: 41. 12: 33. 1 Tim. 6: 17, 18. ‖ *Follow me;* become my disciple. Mark adds (10: 21), as what the Saviour said to the young man, "take up the cross;" that is, submit to self-denial, be ready to endure evils on account of attachment to my cause. See Matt. 10: 38. Mark also observes previously to mentioning this reply of our Lord, that Jesus *loved* the young man; that is, was pleased with his amiable character, and felt a tender regard for him.

22. *He went away sorrowful.* The self-denying course which the Saviour enjoined, appeared too hard; and the young man turned away. The terms on which eternal life was now promised to him, required such a sacrifice as he was not disposed to make; and he was filled with sorrow, for he loved his wealth inordinately. Though he wished for happiness in the future world, yet he did not so love heavenly good as to be willing to sacrifice his present convenience and ease, out of regard to heavenly good. Thus the Saviour detected the absence of supreme love to God, and of true love to man; and showed him that he loved this world more than heaven, and himself more than his neighbor.

Our Lord's treatment of this young man was most wisely adapted to the young man's professions and circumstances. Professing to have been habitually conformed to the commands which the Saviour had repeated, and being a person of much wealth, it would have been a suitable manifestation of his spirit of love and obedience, to renounce worldly gain through a preference for heavenly treasure, and to seek, in a very special manner, the alleviation of human suffering. In his case, the requisition was a wisely-adapted test. To a person in different circumstances, and making a different profession, some other test might have been more suitable. But in no other way could the real character of this person, as seen by Omniscience, be made manifest to himself.

From the case of this young man, let us LEARN,

1. That external correctness and morality are insufficient to secure our salvation.

2. That the love of the present world is ruinous to our eternal interests. Compare 1 John 2: 15—17.

3. That a decided preference of heaven to earth, and the spirit of self-denial, of readiness to endure privations out of regard to the honor of God and to the welfare of men, are necessary in order to please God.

4. That nothing can supply the lack of true religion. Without this, there cannot be complete goodness of character.

23. The Saviour, employing the occasion which had presented itself for instruction, proceeded to speak very freely on the dangers connected with worldly possessions. *Shall hardly enter, &c.*; can with great diffi

24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

25 When his disciples heard *it*, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?

26 But Jesus beheld *them*, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.

27 Then answered Peter, and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?

28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when

culty, or scarcely, become a subject of the new dispensation, and attain its honors and bliss in the coming world. Compare 13: 22. 1 Tim. 6: 9, 10. Jesus more fully explained this declaration by adding, as Mark relates (10: 24), "How hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!"

24. This verse repeats, in a more emphatic manner, the same sentiment as is contained in the preceding verse. *It is easier for a camel*, &c. This was a proverbial manner of expressing the utmost difficulty and the greatest improbability.

25. *Amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?* From their knowledge of their own hearts, and their observation of others, the disciples perceived that men who were not rich, were desirous to become so, and were very much occupied in matters pertaining to their worldly condition.

26. *With men this is impossible.* Jesus readily acknowledged that power superior to man's is necessary in order so to affect the human heart, that salvation may be secured. So many allurements do wealth and worldly avocations present, and so liable are we to be unduly engaged in the cares of the present life, that we are in imminent danger of neglecting our spiritual interests. Without a counteracting influence from above, the desire of riches "drowns men in destruction and perdition." Let us watch against the love of this world, and constantly pray God to bestow on us durable riches and righteousness, "treasure in heaven," even at the expense of all earthly wealth. Compare 13: 22.

27. *We have forsaken all.* In the 21st verse, Jesus had enjoined upon the young man to part with his earthly possessions in order to benefit the poor. Peter, recalling this part of the Saviour's remarks, inquired what blessings would be bestowed on the disciples, as a consequence of their obedience to him. They had abandoned their secular calling, and had become his constant attendants, wholly devoted to his service.

28. Jesus assured the disciples, that in the coming world they would have an abundant recompense, and would be signally honored as sustaining a very intimate relation to him. *In the regeneration.* These words are here obscure. But a careful examination of the connection, and of the meaning which the original word translated *regeneration* bears elsewhere, removes the difficulty. The word *regeneration*, here, does not mean that great change in the character, of which Jesus spoke to Nicodemus (John 3: 3), and of which Paul speaks in the Epistle to Titus (3: 5). It refers to that new and glorious state which will be the consummation of the Messiah's administration; that reestablishment of holiness and happiness, to effect which the Saviour came into the world; the state of glory, in short, when the Messiah shall have gathered around him in heaven all his redeemed people, and shall appear conspicuously as the King of the new

the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands,

state. In order to make this meaning manifest, it may be observed that the word here translated *regeneration* is applied by a Greek writer to express the state of the earth when restored from the flood; and by another Greek writer, to express the renewed state of the Jewish nation after the Babylonian captivity was ended. It is necessary to make a slight alteration in the punctuation of the verse (which we are at liberty to do, as the punctuation did not proceed from divine authority), and to place the comma after the words *followed me*. The verse would then read, *ye which have followed me, in the regeneration* [in the new order of things] *when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory* [on his glorious throne, as the great king of Israel; for thus the people were in the habit of regarding the Messiah, namely, as king of the Jews, or of Israel], then, in that regenerated state of things, *ye shall also sit upon twelve thrones*. That is, the Lord Jesus would, as the Messiah, be signally honored, and these disciples would partake of his honors; he would appear as the king of Israel; they too should be in royal state. The manner of expressing this idea was drawn from the circumstance of there having been twelve disciples, and of Israel having been divided into twelve tribes. In conformity with the then current mode of speaking about the Messiah, Jesus represented himself as a great king over the whole people of Israel, and his twelve disciples as twelve subordinate kings, or rulers, each over a tribe. In this way he wished to make the impression that a state of consummate glory awaited them, after the services which they should render on earth. In no stronger manner could he express this thought to the disciples, such was the state of opinion and of feeling at that time. With Israel, as the chosen people of God, the disciples, in common with other Jews, associated ideas of singular privileges and glory; they were expecting, as a result of the Messiah's coming, a restoration of the ancient dignity and prosperity of the nation, and the subjection of other nations to it; and it was, in their opinion, by becoming Jews, by being incorporated into their nation, that other people were to be really blessed, and to become the people of God. When that state of things should be brought about, and lasting glory be conferred on the people of Israel, nothing could be greater than to be king of this people, and to be chief officers under the King Messiah. ‖ *Judging the twelve tribes of Israel*. The term *judge* is of similar import to our word *rule*, or *govern*; the mention of *the twelve tribes of Israel* is only an extension of the preceding idea, and representing the dignity as exceedingly illustrious on account of its being over the people of God, the Israelites. The simple idea conveyed by this language was, that when the Messiah should have finished his work, and entered upon his reign over the regenerated people of God in glory, these disciples should be partakers of his glory, and should be signally honored. The language here employed, must be understood in accordance with the spiritual nature of the Saviour's government, and of the rewards which he will bestow.

29. *And every one*, &c. The Saviour proceeded to observe, that not only Peter and his fellow-disciples should attain to signal honor and happiness, as the Messiah's servants, but *every one* who should possess a spirit of entire submission and cordial attachment to him, and should endure privations and sufferings for his sake,

for my name's sake, shall receive a hundred fold, and shall inherit everlasting life.

30 But many *that are* first shall be last, and the last *shall be* first.

CHAPTER XX.

FOR the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man *that is* a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard.

should also receive a distinguished recompense, both here and hereafter. Mark (10: 30) and Luke (18: 30) make mention of "this present time," and of "the world to come." Mark, in the verse just referred to, says, "*with persecutions.*" That is, he must expect *persecutions* in this world, as well as a measure of bliss; though, as my disciple, he will have my favor and be happy, yet he must make calculations for not being exempt, while on earth, from trials on account of the cause of Christ.

30. *But many, &c.* Having spoken so freely of the honors and happiness which would be bestowed at the consummation of his dispensation, the Saviour subjoined a proverbial saying, the design of which appears to be, in this connection, to check any undue self-estimation that might possibly arise in their hearts. He cautioned them, that some, who are now held in high esteem, will not have a proportionate dignity hereafter; while others, who receive but little honor, if any, here, will be blessed with distinguished honor hereafter. The disciples ought not to fix their hearts upon honors; for, as to these, the distinctions which exist on earth will not continue in heaven. The distinguished here may occupy a low place there; the disesteemed here may occupy the highest place there. And *all* who arrive at heaven will have reason to regard themselves as greatly honored.

As parallel passages, examine Mark 10: 17—31. Luke 18: 18—30.

Let us REFLECT on

1. The danger connected with being rich. vs. 23, 24. Compare 1 Tim. 6: 17.

2. The proper use of riches. v. 21. Compare 1 Tim. 6: 18, 19.

3. The unspeakable value of heaven, as contrasted with even the highest dignity on earth.

4. The reasonableness of self-denial, for the sake of Christ. Heaven will make amends for all losses and sorrows.

CHAPTER XX.

1. *For, &c.* The parable which now follows, is immediately connected with the preceding conversation, and ought to be read in immediate connection with it. Many persons fail to perceive the design of the parable, in consequence of its being separated from the conversation of which it is a part. The Saviour had just cautioned the disciples against an undue self-esteem and undue expectations in regard to honors in the heavenly kingdom, by letting them know that it would not be a matter of course that those who on earth might be regarded as first, either on account of an earlier entrance upon his service, or any more honorable distinction which they might have here acquired, would have a corresponding honorable distinction in heaven. He wished now to show them, that the honors and bliss of heaven would be bestowed in a manner that would signally display the goodness and bountiful disposition of God. He proceeded to illustrate this matter by a parable, a familiar similitude. The point of the parable seems to be, that God will distribute the rewards of heaven according to his own good pleasure, so as to illustrate his own mercy and liberality; and not in accordance with expectations that might result from a human view of men's comparative merit. Thus the Saviour would check the spirit of pride, and of envy and jealousy, and of the seeking of honors; and would cultivate

2 And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market-place,

4 And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right, I will give you. And they went their way.

5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.

6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?

7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, *that* shall ye receive.

8 So when evening was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them *their* hire, beginning from the last unto the first.

9 And when they came that *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.

10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.

11 And when they had received *it*, they murmured against the good man of the house,

12 Saying, These last have

among his disciples the spirit of humble submission to God, of gratitude for being permitted to occupy any place in the divine kingdom, and of mutual joy at one another's advancement and bliss. ‖ *The kingdom of heaven is like*, &c. As if our Lord had said, The state of things in the Messiah's reign may be likened to the conduct of a certain householder.

2. *A penny a day.* The coin here mentioned bore the value, according to some accounts, of about nine cents of our money; according to others, of fourteen. This was the usual pay for a day's labor.

3. *Third hour;* corresponding to nine o'clock in the morning, according to our reckoning. The day was at that time divided into twelve hours (see John 11: 9); and the night into the same number. We shall have a sufficiently correct notion of the manner of reckoning, if we consider the day uniformly as beginning at our six o'clock, so that the time from six to seven o'clock would correspond to the first hour of the day. ‖ *Market-place.* The word thus translated signifies the place where articles were exposed for sale, where trials were attended and assemblies collected. It was, therefore, a place of public and common resort, suitable for finding laborers.

4. The laborers here spoken of were merely promised that they should receive a suitable compensation.

5. *Sixth and ninth hour;* twelve o'clock, and three in the afternoon.

6. *Eleventh hour;* one hour before the close of the day.

8. *His steward.* The man who had charge of his business.

11. *Good man of the house.* The original word is the same as is translated in the first verse *householder*. It is an old expression, equivalent to our word *proprietor*, or *master of the family*.

wrought *but* one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?

14 Take *that* thine *is*, and go thy way: I will give unto this last even as unto thee.

15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?

16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.

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13. *No wrong;* no injustice.

14. *I will give;* I choose to give, I am disposed, while I do you no injustice, to treat with signal and unexpected kindness these thy fellow-laborers.

15. *Is thine eye evil?* Because I am kind and benevolent, and wish to treat a person abundantly better than his deserts and his expectations, wilt thou indulge in envy, and look on me with suspicion? An *evil eye* means an *envious eye*, or simply *envy*.

16. *So the last, &c.* This verse repeats the proverbial saying, which it was the design of the parable to illustrate. The laborers who came last, were, by the signal kindness of the proprietor, put on an equality with the others in regard to compensation. Those who entered the vineyard first, received a fair and ample compensation, and ought not to have complained of the signal kindness of their employer towards the others. They ought, on the contrary, to have admired his benevolence. So, in respect to the rewards and honors which the disciples had reason to expect, they ought not to regard themselves as occupying such a station, that none could receive favors equal to those which they might receive, nor ought they to cherish a temper unfriendly to the elevation of others to honor and bliss. They ought not to fix their hearts on compensation and dignity, nor to indulge an overweening self-esteem, nor to cherish expectations that might not accord with the benevolent intentions of their Lord. They must remember, that while no injustice nor unkindness would be done to them, it might comport with the signal benevolence of their Master to confer very special favors on others, which would raise them to an equality in bliss with the apostles. Thus the last might be treated as the first, and the first as the last. Thus, too, all the Messiah's servants would receive distinguished honor and bliss, and might all, even the lowest of them, be regarded as raised to royal dignity. Let there, then, be no undue self-valuation, and no disposition to think less worthily of others who are engaged, or who may yet be engaged, in the Lord's service; and let there be no disposition to reflect unkindly on the Lord, if he should look with just as much favor upon other laborers as upon his first disciples. || *For many be called, but few chosen.* Another proverbial saying, applicable to the subject of discourse, and illustrated by the parable. While many are called into my service, few, indeed, of them can be chosen to distinguished honor in my kingdom. In distributing the honors and bliss of the divine kingdom, God will be actuated more by a merciful and benevolent spirit, utterly exceeding the deserts and the expectations of his servants, than by a strict regard to their comparative deserts. He will delight in multiplying his favors to the great company, rather than in elevating some to superior distinction. It ought, indeed, to be sufficient for any person, that he will be allowed to have any share in the exalted, the royal honors and bliss of heaven, without indulging the thought of being elevated to distinction among his fellow-servants. The lowest place in heaven is unspeakably

17 And Jesus, going up to Jerusalem, took the twelve disciples apart, in the way, and said unto them,

18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,

19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify *him:* and the third day he shall rise again.

20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children, with her sons, worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my

too honorable and happy for any man to claim, or to deserve. And if it should please God to bestow equal bliss on some who have not labored so long as others, let this arrangement illustrate, and lead all to admire, the benevolence of God, which, without depressing a single individual, elevates many.

Practical Hints. 1. Admire the condescension of God in admitting men to the bliss and dignity of heaven.

2. Beware of thinking very highly of services which you have performed in the cause of Christ.

3. Rejoice in God's kindness to others. That kindness does you no injury, while it does them immense good.

It may here be observed, that the parable in Luke 17: 7—10, is very applicable to the occasion spoken of in this place by Matthew.

17. *Going up to Jerusalem.* Jesus was now going up to Jerusalem for the last time; and he wished to prepare the minds of the disciples for the events which were soon to occur. Hence he took them *apart*, by themselves, aside from other companies that might be also going to Jerusalem.

18. *They shall condemn him to death.* It was in the power of the Sanhedrim, the highest tribunal among the Jews, to pass sentence of death; but the executing of the sentence belonged, according to the limitation of power introduced by the Romans, to the Roman governor.

19. *Deliver him to the Gentiles;* to the Romans, who then had dominion over the Jews. Compare, as parallel passages, Mark 10: 32—34. Luke 18: 31—34. Luke informs us (18: 34) that the disciples did not understand what their Lord had told them To us it may seem almost inconceivable, that they should not have fully comprehended his meaning. But we must consider, that from their childhood their minds had been filled with error respecting the Messiah, and they had been indulging anticipations entirely contrary to what their Master had been repeatedly telling them. They probably thought, that their Master could not intend to be understood just as he seemed to speak, and therefore they did not permit themselves to see the real truth as he endeavored to enforce it on them.

20. *The mother of Zebedee's children;* James and John; see Matt. 4: 21; also Mark 10: 35. Their mother's name was Salome; for she, who, in Matt. 27: 56, is called the *mother of Zebedee's children*, is, in Mark 15: 40, called *Salome.* || *Worshipping;* bowing down to the earth in token of reverence.

21. *Grant, &c.* Probably the language of our Lord in 19: 28 was not rightly apprehended by the disciples; and they still indulged the thought of great earthly distinction in the administration of the Messiah. The two disciples, James and John, together with their mother, indulged ambitious views in regard to the honors of the Messiah's reign. They perhaps thought, that there was a

two sons, may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with:

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prospect of their being elevated above their brethren, in consequence of their having been distinguished on some former occasions. See Mark 5: 37. Matt. 17: 1. Their mother made request in their behalf. The request that one of her sons might sit on his right hand, and the other on his left, when he should enter on his kingly power, was a request that they might be his two most distinguished officers; that they might occupy stations of power and honor next to his own. Mark (10: 35) represents the two disciples as asking for themselves; but, as in common life a man is said to do himself what he employs others to do for him, so, doubtless, on this occasion, the sons preferred their request through the agency of their mother.

22. *Ye know not what ye ask;* ye ask in a very ignorant manner, not considering the nature of my government, nor the sorrows which I must endure in order to establish it. ‖ *To drink of the cup, &c.* A cup is frequently used in the Scriptures as an image of the sufferings which God is pleased to appoint either for his foes or for his friends. Thus the Saviour says (John 18: 11), in regard to the sufferings which were coming upon him, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Compare, also, Ps. 60: 3. 75: 8. Is. 51: 17, 22. Lam. 4: 21. The idea, then, of the Saviour was, Can ye endure the sufferings which are appointed for me? or such sufferings as I am to endure, before I enter fully on my glory? ‖ *And be baptized, &c.* The words here rendered *baptize* and *baptism* would be more intelligible if their primary meaning were expressed. Allusion is not here made to the New Testament ordinance, but to the extreme suffering which our Lord was to undergo. The idea of being *immersed* in suffering, or *overwhelmed* with suffering, is here expressed by the word *baptize*. The meaning would be more clearly expressed by translating thus — *Can ye be overwhelmed* [can ye bear to be overwhelmed] *with the overwhelming with which I am to be overwhelmed?* In other words, Can ye endure sufferings like those with which I shall be overwhelmed? The enduring of sore calamities is expressed, in other parts of the Bible, by such terms as these — *passing through deep waters*, and *being covered by waves*. See Ps. 69: 2. 42: 7. Is. 43: 2. ‖ *We are able.* So allured were they by the hope of distinguished honor, that they declared themselves able and willing to undergo any sufferings that might be necessary.

23. *Ye shall drink, &c.* Ye will indeed be called to very severe sufferings; sufferings such as I myself shall endure. This language must be understood comparatively. The disciples were not to endure the very same sufferings as their Master would; but they were to endure similar and great sufferings. ‖ *To sit on my right hand and on my left;* to possess the highest places in my government. ‖ *Is not mine, &c.* To assign these high honors is no part of my business; that matter is already arranged by my Father, and *they* shall obtain such distinction for whom he has destined it. It does not pertain to me to distribute such honors, except in accordance with the appointment of my Father; and it does not become me to say any thing in reference to this matter. Thus the Saviour waived the subject. It will be perceived, that in our translation, the words *it shall be given* are print-

but, to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.

24 And when the ten heard *it*, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.

25 But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.

26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

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ed in Italics, as being supplied by the translators, and not found in the original. They are not necessary for the expression of the sense, and might well be omitted. Then the clause would stand thus: "But to sit on my right hand and on my left is not mine to give but [except] *to them* for whom it is prepared [appointed] by my Father."

24. *The ten;* the other disciples. They were indignant at the request of the two brothers, as it was an ambitious aspiring after honors, to the neglect and disadvantage of their companions and equals.

25. *Jesus called them.* The ambitious request of the two brethren, and the indignant feelings of the ten towards them, proved the occasion of the Saviour's impressing on the minds of all the duty of humility, and of his showing the very high estimation in which humility ought to be held among his followers. An aspiring after honors he reprobated, but an humble temper, which will be mainly anxious to do good to others, he represented as most congenial with the new dispensation. ‖ *Princes of the Gentiles;* rulers of the nations. ‖ *They that are great;* their great men, their nobles.

26. *Great among you;* distinguished. ‖ *Your minister;* your servant, waiting on you, and seeking not great things for himself, but, in an humble spirit, holding himself ready to render service for the good of others.

27. *Your servant.* The idea is essentially the same as in the preceding verse. There may be an advance in the thought, expressed by a difference between a servant and a slave. If a person seeks to be *great* among you, let him condescend to be your servant; if he would be very great, so as to be first, preëminent, let him seek for this preëminence by condescending to be your slave. The depth of his humility and condescension in serving you shall measure the height of his true dignity among you.

28. *The Son of man;* the Messiah, your Master. ‖ *Not to be ministered unto, &c.*; not to receive service from others, but to perform service for others. ‖ *And to give, &c.*; even to the extent of giving up his life in their behalf, so as to ransom them from misery. Jesus presented his own example, as to condescension and seeking the good of others, for a pattern to his disciples, and a corrective of the ambitious spirit which they had displayed. Compare Phil. 2: 1—11. See, also, Matt. 18: 1—3. ‖ *For many.* The word *many* is here used in an indefinite manner, like the word *multitudes.* As the parallel passage, examine Mark 10: 35—45.

Remarks. 1. Here is an affecting lesson of man's weakness in seeking for worldly honors. We are too much allured by outward splendor, and are too prone to grasp at earthly greatness. The disciples were cautioned again on this point, just when they were re-

29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.

30 And, behold, two blind men, sitting by the way-side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* Son of David.

31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, *thou* Son of David.

32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?

33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.

34 So Jesus had compassion *on them*, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.

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clining at the last supper. Luke 22: 24—30.

2. Observe the kind manner in which Jesus endeavored to correct the errors and frailties of his disciples. He endeavored to withdraw their minds and hearts from outward dignity, by showing them a more excellent way of obtaining preëminence.

3. Humility is a cardinal virtue of Christianity.

4. True humility is allied to the spirit of usefulness.

5. Let us not value others or ourselves on account of any external circumstances. True worth consists rather in humility, in condescension, and in endeavoring to be useful Let the example of Jesus put to shame our unworthy seeking of earthly dignity and ease.

29. *Jericho.* This was a city next in importance to Jerusalem, and lay about twenty miles nearly east from Jerusalem. In respect to its history, read Josh. 2: 1, &c. 3: 16. 4: 19. 6: 1—27. 1 Kings 16: 34.

30. *Son of David;* one of the appellations of the *Messiah.*

31. *Rebuked them, because, &c.*; rather enjoined upon them, and that with censure, that they should be silent.

An account of the cure here related occurs in Mark 10: 46—52, and Luke 18: 35—43. Mark and Luke speak of only one blind man. Matthew speaks of two, Matthew being in this instance more particular; and the others speaking of one only, on account, perhaps, of his being a well-known person. By comparing the account, as related by Matthew and Mark, with that given by Luke, it will appear that the two former speak of the miracle as performed when Jesus and his company had come out of the city, and Luke represents it as performed while Jesus and his company were approaching the city. In regard to this diversity, two remarks may be made — 1. There were probably some circumstances connected with this transaction which are not related, and which, if they were known, would entirely remove all appearance of diversity in the accounts. 2. It is probable that Jesus spent some time in Jericho; as it was a very important city, and we no where else read of his having visited it. During his stay in the city, he may have made an excursion into the neighboring country; and when he had gone out on such an excursion, and was returning, he may have performed the cure. Matthew and Mark relate, that the event took place when he had gone out of the city, and Luke observes that it took place when (perhaps during this excursion) he had come near to the city.

The account of the blind men may TEACH us,

1. The importance of earnestness and importunity in our supplications.

CHAPTER XXI.

AND when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,

2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose *them*, and bring *them* unto me.

3 And if any *man* say aught unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.

4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,

5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.

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2. The kindness of Jesus in noticing those whom others were disposed to disregard.

3. The proneness of men, even while professing to pay honor to God, to overlook the suffering and wretched.

The Saviour, who so kindly condescended to these blind men, and who went about doing good, is equally ready to hear our prayers, if we really feel our need of spiritual blessings, and earnestly implore his mercy. Let none be discouraged; but, relying on his power and goodness, let all seek earnestly his favor, for he "waiteth that he may be gracious."

CHAPTER XXI.

1. *And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem.* See 20: 17, 18. ‖ *Bethphage;* a small village in the vicinity of the mount of Olives. Mark (11: 1) and Luke (19: 29) mention two places, Bethany and Bethphage; these two were adjacent to each other. ‖ *Mount of Olives;* a mountainous ridge lying east of Jerusalem. As it was a ridge of lofty hills, writers differ in stating the distance from Jerusalem, some saying five furlongs, and others, a Sabbath-day's journey (Acts 1: 12), that is, about seven and a half furlongs from the city. They have reference to different parts of the mountainous range. The name arose from the olive-trees with which it abounded.

2. *Village over against you;* Bethphage. Jesus had already been in Bethany (see John 12: 1), and was now prosecuting his journey. ‖ *An ass — and a colt with her.* The other evangelists, Mark (11: 2) and Luke (19: 30), mention only a colt. It was the colt that Jesus wished for; but the easiest way of having the colt brought was to lead the ass, and the colt would follow.

3. *Aught;* any thing; make any objection to your taking the animals. ‖ *The Lord;* the Master; that is, our Master. The owners of these animals were, in all probability, acquainted with Jesus and his disciples, and were friendly to them; and would, therefore, without hesitation, give them up for his accommodation.

4. *That it might be fulfilled,* &c. In this transaction, there was a fulfilment of what the prophet Zechariah (9: 9) had long before declared respecting the Messiah; so that this act of our Lord's, by which he was again about to show himself publicly to the nation as the Messiah, the promised king of Israel, was in precise accordance with the language of prophecy.

5. *Daughter of Sion.* Sion was one of the hills on which the city of Jerusalem was built, and it was employed as a name equivalent to Jerusalem. By a mode of speech common among the Hebrew writers, the phrase *daughter of Sion* means Sion itself; and as *Sion* is put for *Jerusalem*, the expression *daughter of Sion* means *city of Jerusalem*. So *daughter of Tyre* means the *city of Tyre*.

6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,

7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set *him* thereon.

8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed *them* in the way.

9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he

‖ *Meek;* gentle, peaceable; not a haughty, warlike conqueror. Compare 12: 19, 20. ‖ *Sitting upon an ass.* Anciently, in Oriental countries, princes and the most distinguished men rode on asses. See Gen. 22: 3. Num. 22: 21. Judges 5: 10. 10: 4. 2 Sam. 17: 23. These animals were not, in the East, so mean as they are regarded among us; but, when rightly trained, they were active, and beautiful in appearance. There was, then, nothing degrading in employing this animal, when the Saviour was proposing to enter the metropolis of the Jewish nation amid the acclamations of multitudes, thus drawing attention to himself as the promised king, just before his sufferings, so that when he should be crucified, he would be remembered as the person who had made an entry into the metropolis as the king of the Jews. Asses were used in times of *peace* by people of all classes; while horses were used in *war*. There was, then, a special appropriateness in Jesus, the *Prince of peace*, employing this animal on so public an occasion of announcing himself anew to the nation as their predicted king. ‖ *And a colt;* more correctly, *even a colt.*

7. *And put on them their clothes;* put on them some mantles, to answer the purpose of a saddle. Both the animals seem to be mentioned; but Matthew speaks in a general way, as was usual among the Hebrews, and as we often do in common conversation. The accounts of Mark and of Luke are more precise, and mention only the colt. At that period of the world, the saddle was, in common, merely a piece of cloth thrown over the back of the animal.

8. *Spread their garments in the way, &c.;* mantles, the outside garment, worn by wrapping it around the body. The branches which were strowed in the way, were, as we learn from John 12: 13, branches of palm-trees. Palm-branches were a symbol of joy; they were employed in celebrating the feast of tabernacles. See Lev. 23: 39—43. They were also employed by the Greeks and Romans in celebrating military triumphs. The scattering of leaves and flowers in the streets was, among the ancients, a token of reverence and honor. On public occasions, in the East, when kings, or national ambassadors, made an entry into the cities, distinguished marks of honor were shown. The streets were sprinkled with water; and, with the exception of a small path in the centre of them, were strowed with flowers and branches of trees, and sometimes even richly-embroidered carpets were spread over them.

9. *Hosanna;* a joyful acclamation, derived from the Hebrew language, and properly meaning *save now;* that is, taken in connection with the remaining words, *salvation, divine favor to the son of David*, the King Messiah. This expression, and that which follows, *Blessed is* [be] *he that cometh, &c.*, were taken from Ps. 118: 25, 26; which language would naturally occur to a Jew's mind, when thinking of a formal display of the Messiah, and particularly on the present occasion, when the palm-branches would remind them of the feast of tabernacles. During that feast, the 118th psalm, among others, was sung with much joy, and the shouting of Hosanna! Hosanna! was very fre-

that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!

10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?

11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus, the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

quent. In Mark 11: 9, the expression is slightly varied, thus: "*Blessed be the kingdom.*" But, clearly, the same idea is expressed. ‖ *Hosanna in the highest;* that is, save now in the lofty heaven; equivalent to, Save now, thou who dwellest on high, thou Supreme Majesty of heaven. Perhaps, however, the word *Hosanna* was not always used with a reference to its etymological meaning, and might have come to signify merely *praise* or *glory;* and then the idea intended might have been, Glory be to God among the heavenly hosts. Compare the acclamation in Luke 19: 38.

10. *All the city was moved;* there was a general excitement.

11. *Jesus the prophet.* By the appellation *the prophet, the divinely-commissioned teacher,* he had been more generally known heretofore. Him who had been spoken of as the prophet, belonging to Nazareth in Galilee, now (v. 9) they announce to be the Messiah. The Messiah had been foretold, also, as a prophet, a great religious guide, and revealer of God's will. See Deut. 18: 15.

12, 13. Matthew's account of the cleansing of the temple appears to be given in a way of anticipation; as we learn from Mark 11: 12—15, that the act took place on the day after the entry into Jerusalem. The evangelists are not exact, always, in noting the precise order of events; and in this instance, Mark is more particular than Matthew. ‖ *That sold and bought in the temple.* The temple had a great variety of apartments and open spaces, or areas; and among the rest, one that was suitable for the accommodation of animals, and the sale of all other articles that were needed for the sacrifices and offerings of every kind. It was also a convenience for those who came to worship, to be able thus to provide themselves with the materials required. What was intended, however, at first for accommodation, was perverted into an occasion of gain and extortion. Another evil connected with the trafficking was, the noise and confusion attendant on such occupations, and these, doubtless, needlessly multiplied. ‖ *Tables of the money-changers.* Each adult Jew was required to pay a half-shekel yearly for the support of the temple; and this must be paid in Jewish money. Donations, also, to the treasury, were to be made in Jewish money. But Palestine was under the dominion of the Romans, and for the ordinary purposes of traffic, the Roman coin was in use; and Jews, wherever they were dispersed, were under the necessity of using the Greek and Roman currency, which prevailed. When, therefore, they came to Jerusalem to pay their annual tax, and make presents for the service of the temple, their Greek and Roman money must be exchanged for Jewish. Hence the money-changers, or brokers, found employment. Besides, they doubtless furnished themselves with a supply of small coin, to accommodate those who might have brought with them only larger coin. In making the necessary exchange, the money-changers practised extortion; and constantly violated the principle enforced in Deut. 23: 19, 20. Jesus could not but regard them with a holy indignation. ‖ *Doves.* It was allowed to the poor, that they might

13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves.

14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David! they were sore displeased,

16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea: have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?

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offer *doves* in sacrifice. See Lev. 5: 7. 12: 8.

13. *It is written;* in Is. 56: 7. See also Jer. 7: 11. By forming a sentence from the language of these two passages, Jesus expressed his very deep sense of the desecration of the temple by its being made a place of pecuniary emolument, and particularly of unrighteous gain.

The departing of the traders from the temple, at the command of Jesus, will be explained by referring to the circumstances of the case. He had, the day before, been, so to speak, escorted into the city, amid the acclamations of the populace, as the Messiah, their promised king, and all the feelings of the populace were in his favor. It was regarded as the proper office of the Messiah, to remodel existing institutions, to establish new laws, and in various ways to effect a new order of things. The people, then, would regard him as acting in his appropriate character; and many of the traders, doubtless, would be struck with awe at the appearance of one who had been thus publicly distinguished by the people, and who had the reputation of singular devotion to the cause of piety. Their consciences, too, doubtless, reproached them for the many wrong practices of which they were guilty; and compelled them, however reluctantly, to obey one who appeared thus burning with a true zeal for the honor of God, and as acting by divine authority. Besides, the traders knew and felt, that they could obtain no countenance from the people, should they have attempted resistance. The people knew that the traffic was constantly, in numerous respects, an unrighteous and oppressive business. On a former occasion, Jesus had, in a similar manner, shown his disapprobation of the buying and selling in the temple. John 2: 13—17.

14—16. It is probable, by a comparison with Luke 19: 39, 40, that what is related in these verses, took place on the day of the Saviour's entering the city and the temple, and the day before the cleansing of the temple. *Have ye never read;* in Ps. 8: 2. || *Thou hast perfected praise.* The idea would be better expressed by the words *thou hast appointed praise.* The language in the psalm is slightly different; but the idea is there the same as is here expressed by the Saviour. The psalmist appears to have declared, that God had, in the works of creation and providence, made such a manifestation of his glorious character, that even babes might discern it, and praise him for it; and thus God is said to have *appointed* or *prepared* praise, inasmuch as he had performed a work which laid a foundation for praise. The Saviour applied this thought to the present occasion; as much as to say, If even children are spoken of in the Old Testament as giving praise for the work of creation, much more, in view of the Messiah's having come, ought there to be praise from children,—from young as well as from old. Compare Luke 19: 40. As passages parallel to the verses thus far considered, see Mark 11: 1—11, 15—17. Luke 19: 29—48 John 12: 12—19.

17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.

18 Now in the morning, as he returned into the city, he hungered.

19 And when he saw a fig-tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever. And presently the fig-tree withered away.

20 And when the disciples saw *it*, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig-tree withered away!

21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig-tree, but also, if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done.

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17. *Bethany;* a village about two miles distant from Jerusalem, and which was a frequent and favorite place of resort for Jesus, while in this part of the country. See on verse 1; and compare John, 11th chapter. Mark (11: 11) mentions this instance of retiring to Bethany. It is also probably referred to in John 12: 36.

18. *In the morning;* that is, the next morning; which was the morning of the day on which he drove out the traders from the temple.

19. *In the way;* on the side of the road, not within a private enclosure. The tree was a barren one; not only then destitute of fruit, but never having borne any. Mark (11: 12—14) gives a more particular account of the circumstance here related; and, as completing the account of this day's proceedings, mentions, in vs. 18, 19, the wish of the scribes and chief priests to seize Jesus, and his again retiring, in the evening, from the city. ‖ *Presently.* This word is here to be understood in a general sense, equivalent to our word *soon.* Mark relates more particularly (11: 20), that the disciples noticed the tree's being withered from the roots on the following morning. In animated narration, and in conversation, we often use such words in a similar manner; meaning to express *a very short time.*

21. *If ye have faith.* Jesus frequently showed a desire to inculcate on his disciples the importance of faith; that is, unwavering confidence in God, when we pray to him. He made use of the present occasion for that purpose. ‖ *Unto this mountain.* For a similar method of representing the power of faith, see Matt. 17: 20. By stating a very strong case, our Saviour meant to be understood as saying, that confidence in the divine power is peculiarly acceptable to God, and that God will most favorably regard and answer prayer which proceeds from this spirit of confidence in him. Mark, in relating this conversation, uses language which shows that our Saviour spoke with reference to prayer in general, and not merely to what might be offered by the apostles. He says (11: 23), "*Whosoever* shall say," &c. He also adds another trait in the character of acceptable prayer (11: 25, 26), namely, the spirit of forgiveness. On this point, compare Matt. 6: 14, 15. 18: 21—35. The very extensive promise which our Lord here made to believing prayer, must not, of course, be contemplated without reference to the will and the glory of God. He must be the judge respecting our petitions; and we must confide not only in his ability to grant our requests, and his kind disposition to gratify our desires, but also in his knowledge and wisdom, as determining what ought to be done. In all our prayers, we ought to exercise unlimited and unwavering confidence in the power, love, and wisdom of God. Prayers offered in such a spirit, will be pleas-

22 And all things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer,

ing to him; and such prayers he will answer favorably, unless his wisdom and love see a different course to be the best on the whole. In true submission, we ought always to leave our petitions with him; knowing that we must not dictate, but, as confiding children, and as ignorant, dependent creatures, yield to him the right of deciding. While, then, we place full confidence in God, we must not be arrogant nor presumptuous. If a father should promise his son to give him whatsoever he should from time to time desire, it would, of course, be taken for granted, that the son would not ask what he knew to be contrary to the father's judgment and wishes; it would also be taken for granted, that if the child, in the sincerity and simplicity of his heart, should ignorantly ask for what the father knew it would be wrong and injurious to bestow, the father would be understood as reserving the prerogative of deciding, and of causing his superior wisdom to regulate his proceeding. And in case the father should act in a manner contrary to the request of his son, this would not imply a failure of the promise, inasmuch as, from the nature of the subject, there was a tacit condition, that what was asked should, on the whole, be in accordance with the father's judgment and desire for the child's welfare. The promise to bestow whatever he should ask, surely did not imply, that the child's youthful, inexperienced mind should have the precedence of his father's; but it implied great love, and earnest desire for the happiness of the child, and willingness to do any thing, however great, that should be within the compass of the father's power, and that the father should see it suitable and proper for him to bestow. And while the promise implied this on the part of the father, would it not be taken for granted on the part of the son, that he would exercise as much confidence in the wisdom, as in the love and power of his father; and that he would cheerfully concede to him the right, in all cases, of determining what would be for the best? Such a view as this relieves the subject of prayer from many difficulties which some persons feel; and shows that praying in faith means praying with confidence in God, and with hearty submission to God, rather than with an unqualified belief that the precise objects of our prayer shall be granted.

22. And all things whatsoever, &c. The remarks on the preceding verse present the cautions necessary to a right perception of the meaning of this verse. Mark says (11 : 24), "*Believe that ye receive them;*" that is, believe that ye shall receive them. The present tense is here used for the future, as is not unfrequent. The idea is, Place implicit confidence in God, and let no doubt respecting his power, love, and wisdom, wither your hearts in approaching him; for to approach God without confiding in him, with an unconfiding, doubting, suspicious frame of mind, is not filial, is not becoming our relation to God, and reflects dishonor upon him. When our Lord says, *Believe that ye receive* [that is, shall receive] *them*, we must of course understand him in a manner adapted to the nature of the case. He was enjoining the duty of exercising entire confidence in God, of banishing that doubting, vacillating state of mind which would arise from a fear that God has no particular regard for his children, that he is capricious, or that he can in any way be hindered from manifesting his love to us. If God has made any particular promises to us, we must not dishonor him, nor distress ourselves by fearing that he will fail of accomplishing his promise. If the matter respecting which we pray, be not one of specific promise, we must not dishonor God nor distress ourselves, by any derogatory views of the divine power, or love, or wisdom; but must pray to him in a spirit of childlike confidence, believing implicitly that he has power adequate to accomplish our request,

believing, ye shall receive.

23 And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you

that he has love sufficient to prompt a favorable answer, and that he has wisdom sufficient to guide to a right issue; and that if, in view of all things, he knows it would be best to gratify our desires, he will most certainly gratify them. Such is the meaning of praying with faith, or believing, or, as Mark expresses it, believing that *we receive* our requests. But we shall greatly err, if we imagine our prayers are entirely destitute of faith unless we do actually believe, without any qualification, that God will certainly grant what we ask. For God does not require us to believe without appropriate evidence; and in regard to a matter concerning which there is not a specific promise, we may be destitute of the evidence that God will certainly do as we desire; while at the same time we may be in full possession of evidence that he has power, love, and wisdom, abundantly adequate to grant our requests, provided it be suitable that the request be granted.

Examine, as passages parallel to this, respecting the fig-tree and prayer, Mark 11: 12—14, 20—26.

From the account of the fig-tree, let us LEARN the danger connected with being unprofitable servants. Every man ought to live according to the will of God, and thus render service and honor to him. But if we fail thus to serve God, we must expect a curse.

In regard to PRAYER, we have great encouragement to pray with the strongest confidence in God. To see the greatness of this privilege, compare the happiness of a true Christian, who, as a child of God, can commit all his affairs to the wisdom and love of his almighty Father in heaven, either with the indifference or with the disquietude of a person who feels not his spiritual wants, and cannot devolve his cares on Jehovah. Or, compare the Christian with a poor heathen, who knows no better a god than the lifeless block which man's hands have fashioned. Compare these several persons together, when in circumstances of distress, and when approaching the eternal world.

23. *And when he was come into the temple.* The conversation respecting the fig-tree took place between Jesus and the disciples, on the way to Jerusalem (see Mark 11: 27); when they had arrived, they went to the temple. The manner of Jesus' entering the city a short time before, his vindicating of the sanctity of the temple, his teaching there, and the various works which he had performed, gave him much celebrity, and excited the chief priests and other distinguished men to jealousy. Hence they came to him to make inquiries, and, doubtless, with an attempt to insnare him in what he might say. Being the principal men of the nation, they doubtless belonged to the Sanhedrim, the greatest tribunal, and were plotting for his condemnation and death. || *By what authority, &c.* Jesus had not been authorized by the Sanhedrim; and to that body it appears to have belonged to watch over the religious affairs of the nation, and to decide questions pertaining to their religious state. As they had not commissioned him, nor countenanced him, they asked, by what right he was acting; expecting, doubtless, that he would give a direct reply of such a sort as would furnish them a handle against him.

24. *Jesus answered.* He replied not in a direct manner, but by asking them a question of a similar charac-

by what authority I do these things.

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

26 But if we shall say, Of men, we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.

27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

28 But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons: and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard.

29 He answered and said, I will not; but afterward he repented, and went.

30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir, and went not.

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ter; proposing, that if they would answer him, he would reply to their question, and intending, probably, that the just and proper reply to his question would be the reply to theirs, and thus leading them to answer themselves.

25. *The baptism of John.* Under the term *baptism*, the Saviour here meant to include the whole office of John, of which the administration of baptism was a very prominent part. The amount of the question was this: Did John the Baptist, in calling the people to repentance (Matt. 3: 2), in baptizing those who professed repentance and promised a new life (Matt. 3: 6—9), and in declaring Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah (John 1: 29—36), — did John the Baptist, in these proceedings, act by authority from God, or by authority from man? Did he have a divine commission, or did he act without a divine commission? ‖ *From heaven;* that is, from God. ‖ *Why did ye not then believe him?* Though multitudes professed to follow the directions of John, yet the Pharisees and scribes, and other distinguished men, declined obedience to his teaching. See Matt. 3: 7—12. Luke 7: 29—35.

26. *All hold John as a prophet.* The term *prophet* here means a religious teacher with authority from God. In that light was John regarded by the mass of the people. See Luke 7: 29. Matt. 3: 5—6. Mark 6: 20. ‖ *We fear the people.* The chief priests and other distinguished men had great reason to fear the indignation of the people, if they had ventured publicly to deny the divine authority of John the Baptist.

27. *We cannot tell;* or, as it is in the original, *we know not.* Plainly, an insincere answer; an evading of the question, for the purpose of avoiding a conclusion which they would dislike. ‖ *Neither tell I you, &c.* This remark either implied, that a just and fair answer to his question (which, if they had obeyed the dictates of their consciences, they could not but have given) would have been also an answer to their own question; or it showed, by bringing their insincerity before their own eyes, that it would have answered no valuable purpose had he given a direct reply to their inquiry. They had so often shown a cavilling, dishonest state of mind, that there was little encouragement to answer their inquiries. Jesus knew they had some ill design to accomplish. Compare Mark 11: 27—33. Luke 20: 1—8.

28. *A certain man.* Jesus now proceeded to speak a parable, having reference to those men who had just been conversing with him, and to others in the nation of a similar character. In this parable he brought to view their real character in the sight of God.

30. *I go, sir, and went not.* The

31 Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen *it*, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a wine-press in it, and built a tower, and let it out

son made fair promises and professions, but yet pursued a disobedient course. Such was the character of the chief priests and scribes, and other leaders of the nation. They made a fair show of regard to the authority of God; but, alas! their lives were a constant violation of their professions.

31. *Whether of them twain;* which of the two. ‖ *The publicans and the harlots.* These, according to public estimation, did not profess to be obedient to God. But many of such persons, having profited by the religious instructions of John, and of Jesus and his disciples, had been brought to true sorrow for their guilty lives, and had commenced a life of obedience. And bad as they had been, destitute as they had been regarded of all hope of the divine favor, yet they had come to a share in the Messiah's blessings, and would participate in the happiness of his administration, rather than the proud, self-confident leaders and teachers, who pretended to obey the will of God, and claimed to be the favorites of God.

32. Jesus proceeded himself to apply the parable. *Way of righteousness;* in a righteous, holy way of living, and pointing out the path of righteous obedience. ‖ *Ye believed him not.* Compare Matt. 3:7—9. Luke 7:30. ‖ *The publicans and the harlots believed him.* Compare Luke 7:29. 16:16. See on Matt. 11:12. ‖ *Repented not afterward;* after all the manifestation of power over the hearts of men, after all these evidences of God's working with John, ye yet exercised no regret at your former disobedience, and entered not upon a new and righteous course of life.

Though this parable was spoken with special reference to the chief priests and elders, WE MAY LEARN from it, in reference to all ages,

1. That outward dignity in sacred offices, and a profession of obedience to God, may consist with a real neglect in heart of God's will.

2. That we ought not to despair respecting the salvation of even abandoned sinners; they may, by means of religious instruction, be brought to reflection, and to such a sense of their guilt and danger, as will lead them to seek forgiveness in God's appointed way.

3. That God's judgment respecting men is very different from men's judgment of themselves and of one another. The religious dignitaries of the Jewish nation were held in high repute, and arrogated to themselves much honor; but Jesus detected the utter emptiness of their pretensions.

33. After thus exposing the real absence of true love and obedience to God in the hearts of the priests and other distinguished men among the Jews, Jesus proceeded, in another parable, more fully to develop their guilt, and the awful danger which they were incurring. He likened them to husbandmen, laborers on a farm, whom a proprietor employed to carry on his farm, and who, when required to send him the proceeds, treated injuriously, time after time, the proprietor's servants who had

to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36 Again he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

37 But last of all, he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39 And they caught him, and cast *him* out of the vineyard, and slew *him*.

40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out *his* vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

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been sent to them, and, at last, when the proprietor's son was sent to them, abused him and put him to death. Against such husbandmen the indignation of the proprietor would justly be excited; and he might be expected to bring them to signal punishment, and to take into his service other laborers. *Householder;* master of a family. ‖ *Hedged.* Vineyards were usually enclosed with a thorn-hedge, or with a wall. ‖ *Digged a wine-press.* The wine-presses consisted of two receptacles, an upper and a lower; they were sometimes built of stones and plastered over, or they were hewn out of a large rock. Into the upper receptacle the grapes were thrown and trodden out by several men. The juice flowed out through a grated aperture near the bottom of the upper receptacle into the lower receptacle. ‖ *Built a tower.* Towers were erected in vineyards, of a very considerable height, and were intended for the accommodation of keepers, who defended the vineyards from thieves and from troublesome animals. The elevation of such towers in Eastern countries, at the present time, is sometimes eighty feet. ‖ *Let it out.* The sequel shows that the vineyard was not rented out for money; but the husbandmen were hired to cultivate it, and were to send the fruits to the owner.

37. *They will reverence my son.* This they might naturally be expected to do, however shamefully they had treated the servants.

40. *Lord of the vineyard;* the owner, called, in v. 33, the *householder*.

41. *He will miserably destroy, &c.* This is represented by Matthew, as a reply made by the persons to whom Jesus was speaking. Mark (12: 9), and Luke (20: 16), in relating the parable, omit the circumstance of this sentiment being expressed by the chief priests and scribes, and represent Jesus as making the declaration. Perhaps, in accordance with the representation of Mark and Luke, Jesus did actually repeat the declaration which his hearers had made; and the solemn repetition of it by himself made them distinctly perceive the application of the parable. Similar diversities in stating the circumstances of an event are common among all men, while yet they may agree in their testimony respecting the event. The sentiment was uttered; and it accorded with the honest convictions and judgment of all present. Luke adds (20: 16), that some persons,

42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

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hearing the sentiment expressed, exclaimed *God forbid!* Being struck with the alarming nature of the sentiment, and filled with fear in view of its application to themselves, or to those whom they had been accustomed to regard with reverence, they involuntarily deprecated such a visitation of wrath. The parable may properly be regarded as terminating here; for the subsequent remarks are manifestly a plain, unembellished application of the sentiment to the chief priests and scribes. The householder represented God; the husbandmen, the chief men of the Jewish nation, to whom a great trust was committed, with all the necessary advantages for rightly discharging their duties. The servants represented the prophets and religious teachers sent from time to time, for securing to God the returns of praise and grateful obedience, but who were often abused in various ways. The son represented the Messiah, Jesus Christ, whom the authorities of the nation had determined to slay. After having thus consummated their guilt, signal vengeance would be taken of these chief men; and others would be called into the service of God, to conduct the affairs of his kingdom, or to manage his administration on earth.

42. As peculiarly applicable to the case of the heads of the Jewish nation, Jesus quoted a passage from Ps 118: 22, 23, in which God is represented as raising to signal honor an individual whom the chief men had endeavored to set aside as unsuitable for the dignity. *The stone.* This language is metaphorical. The Hebrew state was likened to an edifice. In edifices, the corner-stone was a very conspicuous and very important object; the whole building, so to speak, resting on it. ‖ *Head of the corner;* chief corner-stone. A certain stone disregarded, rejected, indeed, by the builders of this edifice, was yet, by God's appointment, selected as the principal stone, the corner-stone. This language, which probably pointed out David, who had been disesteemed by Saul and other chief men, yet who was selected by God to be the highest officer in the nation, was remarkably applicable to Jesus, who was disesteemed and rejected by the highest authorities of the nation, but who yet was the one whom God had appointed to the highest dignity, that of the Messiah, the anointed king, in the new dispensation, the reign of heaven. God's hand must be acknowledged in this issue of events.

43. *I say unto you;* you, chief men, and your nation. ‖ *The kingdom of heaven;* the blessings of the Messiah's administration. ‖ *Given to a nation;* given to others, to another community, namely, that which is now called the Christian church. ‖ *Bringing forth the fruits thereof;* living in a manner adapted to this new dispensation; serving God acceptably; presenting him such returns of love and obedience as the nature of the Messiah's dispensation requires.

44. *Whosoever shall fall,* &c. The mention, in the 42d verse, of a stone, suggested to the mind of Jesus another method of figuratively representing the destruction which was ere long to overtake the Jews. A person rashly or carelessly stumbling against a stone, will receive injury;

45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

CHAPTER XXII.

AND Jesus answered and spake unto them again

and the stone hurled against a person will bring on him far greater injury. So, the Messiah, represented here by a stone, was to prove an occasion of sore calamity and ruin to the Jewish nation. Compare Luke 2: 34. 1 Pet. 2: 7, 8. There may here be expressed different degrees of danger, corresponding to different degrees of guilt. Multitudes, through the prejudices of education, and in various ways, might stumble at the Messiah's appearance, and fail to receive him; others might reject him, not through lack of evidence that he was the Messiah, or through their confidence in the teachings of others, but through a settled hostility to his character and doctrines; and they would consequently experience severest judgments in their being finally overthrown. The destruction, in each case, may be a final and remediless one; yet that which is represented by being crushed through the falling of a stone, will be a far more aggravated one than the other. A distinction may thus have been made between the mass of the Jewish people, and the heads of the nation, who had exposed themselves, by their determined opposition, to the most signal vengeance of God. For parallel passages, see Mark 12: 1—12. Luke 20: 9—19.

Reflections. 1. Obstinately to reject the Saviour is a heinous sin, and will expose to unspeakably awful doom. vs. 43, 44. Consider, too, that *to neglect* the Saviour is likewise fraught with danger. Compare Heb. 2: 3.

2. How awful a doom, to be deprived of religious privileges! v. 43.

46. *They took him for a prophet;* for a divinely-commissioned person, a teacher acting by special divine authority.

CHAPTER XXII.

1. *Spake unto them again.* In immediate connection with what has just been related, Jesus spoke another parable, which was applicable to the state and prospects of the Jewish nation. He described a king as making a splendid entertainment in honor of his son, and as having, in view of this, sent abroad invitations to the entertainment. At the proper time, notice was given to those who were invited, that their presence was requested. They neglected the message, abused and killed the servants who bore it. In consequence, the king condemned them and their city to destruction. So God had been preparing a rich variety of blessings for men, and first for the Jewish nation, in connection with the entrance of his Son, the Messiah, upon his royal dignity, as the spiritual king and lord. To the Jews were made known the intentions of God; and in due time, his servants were sent forth to announce the joyful tidings of God's love being manifested, and to call the people to a participation of the blessings of the new dispensation. But already, since the coming of John the Baptist, had the servants of God who were announcing the new dispensation been neglected and badly treated, and ere long would the Jews put to death some of those who were laboring for their spiritual benefit; and as a consequence of their guilt, ruin was destined to overtake the nation.

Thus far the parable had respect to the Jews. But the Saviour made an addition. The entertainment being prepared, the king procured a large number of guests from every quarter; among the guests, however, was one,

by parables, and said,

2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and *my* fatlings *are* killed, and all things *are* ready: come unto the marriage.

5 But they made light of *it*, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise.

6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated *them* spitefully, and slew *them*.

7 But when the king heard *thereof*, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.

9 Go ye, therefore, unto the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.

10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.

11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:

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who manifested an utter want of respect and gratitude towards the king. He was at once thrust out from the joyous festivities, as a person unsuitable to be occupying a place among the king's friends and favorites. By this latter part of the parable, the Saviour showed, that though the Jews would reject him, and would, therefore, be themselves rejected, yet others would be brought to the favor of God, and to the enjoyment of those blessings which had been provided. He also showed, that the enjoyment of those blessings would depend upon the characters of men; and that however some who were not of a suitable character might now be found among the friends of God, and the partakers of his bounty, yet, for a continuance among them, and for the permanent and ultimate possession of the Messiah's blessings, they would have no reasonable hope. They, too, would be rejected, and would be consigned to hopeless misery.

2. *The kingdom of heaven;* the Messiah's dispensation; the system of religion and of spiritual blessings introduced by him. || *A marriage.* The word thus rendered may signify *an entertainment* in general, a banquet. Nothing is said in the parable respecting any marriage ceremonies. The Saviour meant, probably, to describe a king making an entertainment in honor of his son, as a suitable method of signifying either his admitting his son to a share of his royal dignity, or his distinctly marking him out as his successor.

3. *To call them that were bidden.* It was not unusual among the ancients for two invitations to be given; the last of which mentioned the particular time at which the guests were desired to come. || *To the wedding;* the entertainment.

6. *Entreated;* an old word, corresponding to our word *treated.*

8. *Were not worthy;* not suitable, not fit to come to such an entertainment.

10. *Highways;* the most frequented streets. || *Bad and good.* Compare 13: 25, 28, 38, 48.

11. *A wedding garment;* a garment suited to the festival; or a garment

12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.

13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14 For many are called, but few *are* chosen.

15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in *his* talk.

16 And they sent out unto him their disciples, with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for

given him by the king for wearing at the entertainment. It was sometimes the case, that a king, when he made a feast, presented vestments to all who were invited, with which they were expected to clothe themselves, before they sat down to the feast. If a person had thus received a garment from the king, and did not at once clothe himself with it, and render his homage to the king, he ran the hazard of provoking the king's displeasure. Such neglect argued the utter absence of a respectful and grateful mind, and would naturally be regarded as an insult to the king.

12. *And he was speechless.* He knew the established custom of society, and what was expected of him, and in what light his conduct would naturally be viewed.

13. *Into outer darkness;* that is, into the darkness without. Feasts were held towards, and after, evening. The rooms in which they were held were lighted up, and were warm and cheerful. In the climate of Palestine, the night, particularly when approaching towards morning, was very cold. To be thrust out, then, from a room in which an entertainment was held, would not only be disgraceful, but would subject one to distress; and might well be employed as a symbol of sorrow and misery.

14. Jesus then quoted a proverbial saying; the import of which, as here used, was, that though men might be invited to the enjoyment of God's favor, many of them would yet fail of becoming his favorites. He would thus lead to calm and considerate reflection, whether we, each one of us, belong to the happy number, whose characters can be approved, and who will be admitted to the endless bliss of heaven; whether, in short, we have that love, reverence and esteem for God, and that attachment to his Son, and that delight to honor his Son, which are justly required.

15. *Entangle him in his talk;* insnare him by conversation; draw from him some expressions which might serve as an accusation against him, and by which they might set some party among the people against him, and ultimately procure his death.

16. *Their disciples;* some of the followers, or scholars, of the Pharisees. ‖ *The Herodians.* These were probably persons who, from political considerations, were friendly to Herod, and consequently to the Romans, by whose authority Herod held dominion. The persons who thus went to Jesus, both Pharisees and Herodians, went in a hypocritical manner, pretending to have a case of conscience, and to repose great confidence in the sincerity and independence of Jesus, as a religious teacher. The question, which they desired to propose, was one which enlisted much feeling, and respecting which the two parties who came to Jesus held different opinions. The Jews, in general, were very restless under the Roman yoke, and conceived it highly disgraceful, if not morally wrong, that they should be paying tribute or taxes to a foreign and heathen power. With these sentiments

any *man:* for thou regardest not the person of men.

17 Tell us, therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cesar, or not?

18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, *ye* hypocrites?

19 Show me the tribute-money. And they brought unto him a penny.

20 And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription?

21 They say unto him, Cesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render, therefore, unto Cesar, the things which are Cesar's; and unto God, the things that are God's.

22 When they had heard *these words*, they marvelled, and

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the Pharisees, doubtless, coincided; while the Herodians sided rather with the Romans. Luke says expressly, (20: 20), that these persons went as spies. ‖ *Thou regardest not*, &c.; thou art not a partial man; favoring one and then another, according as it may serve a turn, and having respect of persons.

17. *Is it lawful*, &c. Cesar was a common name applied to the Roman emperors. The emperor, at the time here spoken of, was Tiberius Cesar. The conquered provinces of the empire were subject to a tax for the support of the government. But as this was to be paid to a heathen power, by descendants of Abraham and David, who were indulging most lofty notions of earthly dominion, the Jews were very reluctant to bear this mark of servitude, and questioned whether it was right for them thus to submit to a foreign power.

18. *Their wickedness.* There was a manifest artifice in such a company's proposing such a question. For if Jesus had given a direct reply, whether he had said yes, or no, advantage would have been taken of his reply by the one or the other of the parties present. Had he said yes, the Pharisees would easily have excited a popular tumult against him. Had he said no, the Herodians would have accused him before the civil authorities as a seditious person; and the Pharisees would gladly have borne testimony against him as having uttered a rebellious sentiment. Jesus saw through their design, and let them know that he saw through it. He charged them with being hypocrites, and with endeavoring to lead him into difficulty. ‖ *Tempt ye me;* induce me to say something which you may employ to my disadvantage.

19. *The tribute-money;* the coin in which the Roman tax was paid. ‖ *A penny;* a denarius, a small Roman coin, equivalent, according to some estimates, to about nine cents of our money; according to other estimates, to about fourteen cents.

21. *Cesar's.* The money current among the Jews bearing the stamp of the Roman government, was a sufficient indication that they were under the dominion of Cesar, that is, of the Roman emperor. By their own acknowledgment, in having Roman money as the ordinary currency of the country, they were the subjects of Cesar. This circumstance the Saviour made the foundation of his reply. If they were subjects of Cesar, then let them render obedience to Cesar. The civil state of the country the Messiah came not to interfere with; and a direct answer to their question he would waive. At the same time, he would lay down a principle by which they might regulate their conduct, if they had any scruples of conscience.—Whatever things are due from you to Cesar, render to Cesar; and what things are due from you to God, render to God. If you acknowledge that you ought, according to your law, to pay a yearly tax for the support of God's temple, pay it to God. And if you acknowledge a subjection to the

left him, and went their way.

23 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

25 Now, there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased; and having no issue, left his wife unto his brother.

26 Likewise the second also, and the third unto the seventh.

27 And last of all the woman died also.

28 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.

30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

Roman power, render to Cesar what, by your own acknowledgment, belongs to Cesar. By placing the matter in this light, while he spoke to the conviction of their consciences, he gave no just cause of offence to either party. Every one must have felt the propriety of the principle he enforced; and he left it to themselves to make the application. As parallel passages, see Mark 12: 12—17. Luke 20: 20—26.

23. *Sadducees.* See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, III. 2. The Sadducees believed, that besides God, there was no other spiritual being, whether good or bad. They believed, that the soul and the body died together, and that there could be no resurrection. Compare Acts 23: 8. ‖ *Resurrection.* This word is, in this conversation of our Lord, of more extensive meaning than simply *the rising again of the body;* it also denotes *future life*, that is, the continued life of the soul while separated from the body. The Saviour intended to meet the whole ground of the Sadducees' skepticism, and especially to show the error respecting the soul's ceasing to exist when the body is dead.

24. *Moses said.* See Deut. 25: 5.

25—28. The case here presented to our Lord was doubtless only an imagined case, such as might possibly occur; and the representation was devised, in order to set in the strongest light the Sadducees' difficulty respecting the resurrection and the future state.

29. *Not knowing the Scriptures;* the Scriptures of the Old Testament, in which are satisfactory evidences, that the soul survives the death of the body. These evidences from the word of God the Sadducees had not sufficiently considered. ‖ *Nor the power of God;* not considering that the omnipotence of God is adequate to the work of raising the dead.

30. *In the resurrection;* in the future state, particularly after the resurrection. The state of things in the future world is different from the state of things in this world. Marriage is appropriate to this world, but there will be no occasion for it in the coming world; for those who attain to the bliss of the future world, who attain to a blessed resurrection, will be like angels, beings not constituted for the marriage relation. Thus the Saviour removed the difficulty with which the Sadducees expected to press him. By his authority as a divine teacher, he declared that such is the state of things in the future world, that the difficulty they suggested cannot exist. That the word *resurrection* here relates to the future state of the righteous, and not indiscriminately to the future state of all men, is evident from the language of Luke 20: 35, &c.

31 But, as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

33 And when the multitude heard *this*, they were astonished at his doctrine.

34 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

35 Then one of them, *which was* a lawyer, asked *him a question*, tempting him, and saying,

31. *Resurrection;* the future life; the continued existence of the soul. ‖ *Spoken unto you by God.* Ex. 3: 6.

32. *God of the dead.* The word *dead* is here equivalent to the phrase *destitute of existence*, or *beings that have no existence.* God is not the God of non-existent things, but of living beings. The fact, that Jehovah called himself the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, long after those patriarchs had ceased to live on earth, our Saviour presented as showing that those patriarchs were regarded by Jehovah as not having ceased to exist. They were not indeed in this world; but they still were in existence, for God calls himself still their God. This language is harmonious with the sentiment, that there is a future state of being; and that those patriarchs were still regarded as living beings. The Saviour's mode of reasoning, on this occasion, may be thus exhibited; he declared that there is no impossibility in respect to future existence, for the power of God is adequate to securing the continued life of those who have deceased on earth; he also mentioned that the Scriptures of the Old Testament teach this continued life. Having thus given the sanction of his authority to the doctrine of a future state, he proceeded to observe that the very language employed by God to Moses, at the burning bush, recognized the continued existence of the patriarchs.

33. *Astonished at his doctrine;* rather, at his teaching. They saw the propriety of his remarks, and viewed the subject in a more satisfactory light than ever before. Though the Saviour so easily disposed of the difficulty suggested by the Sadducees, yet it doubtless had been viewed by the Sadducees as a very serious difficulty. The Pharisees, and the mass of the people, had some very vague notions about the resurrection, supposing it would be intimately connected with the coming of the Messiah, and yet they believed the Messiah's reign was to be on earth, and during the glory of his administration, human beings and human affairs, though variously modified for the better, would be substantially the same as before. They did not contemplate the spiritual government of the Messiah as his great object; but having fixed their minds upon a great temporal kingdom, and a resurrection in connection with that, they would be pressed by such a difficulty as the Sadducees had presented. Compare, as parallel passages, Mark 12: 18—27. Luke 20: 27—38.

34. *They were gathered together;* they came together for consultation. The manner in which the Saviour had treated the Sadducees was adapted greatly to increase the esteem and confidence of the people towards him. This the Pharisees dreaded; and they wished to entangle him in the various disputes of the times, so as in some way to injure his reputation among the people.

35. *A lawyer;* an expounder of the laws of Moses; the same as a scribe. See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, III. 4. The laws of Moses were of a religious as well as civil character; so that those who are called *lawyers*, in the New Testament, were engaged

36 Master, which *is* the great commandment in the law?

37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38 This is the first and great commandment.

39 And the second *is* like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, *The son* of David.

43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord? saying,

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in studies and pursuits very different from those of lawyers among us. They were interpreters of the Mosaic statutes and religion, and of the traditions which had been handed down from ancient times. ‖ *Tempting him;* testing his skill as a teacher. Compare Mark 12: 28—34. Mark omits the mention of an agreement among the Pharisees, and merely speaks of "one of the scribes" (that is, lawyers) coming to him.

36. *The great commandment.* The Pharisees divided the commands of God into important and unimportant, grave and light. In conformity with this division, they disputed on the question. Which command is the greatest? and so on other commands, Which are to be preferred in point of importance, and which may be placed in the class of inferior ones? See Matt. 5: 19.

37. *Thou shalt love,* &c. Deut. 6: 5. The meaning of the words is, Thou shalt love the Lord supremely, above all other beings or objects.

39. *Thy neighbor,* &c. Lev. 19: 18. For the meaning of the word *neighbor,* and the extent of the duty enjoined, see Luke 10: 25—37.

40. *Hang;* depend upon, are comprised in. ‖ *All the law and the prophets;* the whole system of religion contained in the Old Testament. By the expression "the law and the prophets," the Jews designated their sacred Scriptures. The sum and substance of religion, as enforced in the Jewish Scriptures, are contained in these two commandments. All true religion must exist in the heart, and may be reduced to love to God and love to man. Emphatically is this true respecting the Christian religion. Compare Mark 12: 28—34. Mark relates, that the scribe to whom Jesus was speaking, expressed a warm and complete satisfaction with the reply of Jesus, and that Jesus declared him to be *not far from the kingdom of God;* that is, to have such views of religious truth as would accord with the principles of the new dispensation; in other words, to have correct views. Compare 1 Cor. 13: 1—13.

42. *What think ye of Christ?* rather, What think ye of the Messiah? particularly as to his parentage. During our Saviour's abode on earth, the name *Christ* was not given to him as a proper name, like the name *Jesus.* It was at that time a title of office, and was of the same import as the word *Messiah,* or the phrase *the Lord's anointed one.* The question proposed by our Lord had respect to the Messiah, not to the opinions of the Pharisees respecting himself as claiming to be the Messiah. ‖ *The son of David.* See 1: 1.

43. *In spirit;* under the influences of the Holy Spirit, or by inspiration. ‖ *Lord.* In order to understand the import of this question, we must consider, that in ancient times, and in the Eastern nations, there prevailed more preciseness and formality in the application of titles than among us. In their conversation, the distinction be-

44 The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?

46 And no man was able to answer him a word; neither durst any *man*, from that day forth, ask him any more *questions*.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THEN spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,

2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:

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tween superior and inferior was more carefully observed. We apply the title *sir* to inferiors and equals as well as to superiors; this would not accord with Oriental notions. A king may in our times address certain high officers by the title *My lords;* in just the same manner as a person inferior to them would address them. But in the East, such terms of respect and honor were given as expressions of superiority on the part of those to whom they were given; and the superior did not use them in application to one who was regarded as inferior or equal to himself. There was, then, something remarkable in the fact, that David, a most distinguished monarch, who acknowledged no earthly superior, should, in speaking of the Messiah, call him *his lord*, thus implying that the Messiah was to be his superior. And yet the Messiah was to be his son; and for a father to apply to his son a term expressing superiority, was quite different, in the customs of the Hebrews, from ordinary usage; so that it might well be regarded as a matter of inquiry, how David could speak of *his son* as being *his lord*.

44. *The Lord*, &c. See Ps. 110: 1. The words *the Lord* here, are, in the original language of the psalm, *Jehovah*. ‖ *Sit thou on my right hand;* take a station of the highest dignity, and become partaker of the honors of government. ‖ *I make thy foes thy footstool;* wholly subdue thine enemies, and make thee wholly and finally victorious.

46. The Pharisees appear to have been thrown into a difficulty, from which an attentive examination of the psalm referred to, might have extricated them. The Messiah was indeed to be a descendant of king David; but in certain respects he was to be immensely superior to David; he was to sustain a very peculiar relation to Jehovah, and to possess such dignity as to have a participation in Jehovah's government. David, then, while contemplating the Messiah in this intimate relation to Jehovah, sharing in the honors of the divine government, would behold a person immensely superior to himself, to whom the title *my lord*, given by David to the Messiah, would be altogether appropriate, while, at the same time, in another respect, David would regard the Messiah as his son. The true solution of the difficulty appears to be, that the Messiah was, "according to the flesh" (according to his human nature), "of the seed of David," was David's son (Rom. 1: 3); and according to his spiritual, divine nature, he was David's lord. Even if the Pharisees had perceived, that in some respects the Messiah was to be so greatly superior to David as to be properly called David's *lord*, they might have declined saying so, through fear that Jesus, who claimed to be the Messiah, would make their reply a further occasion of promoting his own cause. *Ask him any more questions;* that is, more questions of such a sort as they had recently been attempting to harass and entangle him with. Compare Mark 12: 35—37. Luke 20: 41—44.

CHAPTER XXIII.

2. *In Moses' seat.* Moses was the lawgiver and guide of the Hebrews, and his instructions were to regulate their opinions and conduct. The

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, *that* observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.

4 For they bind heavy burdens, and grievous to be borne, and lay *them* on men's shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.

5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,

scribes and Pharisees expounded the law of Moses, and thus were religious teachers, and occupied a relation to the Jews similar to that which Moses once held.

3. *All therefore*, &c.; listen to their instructions, and carefully perform what they enjoin. The public teachers made known and enforced the laws of Moses; and so far as they communicated the precepts of Moses, their instructions were to be heeded. But while their instructions, drawn from the inspired volume, were to be sacredly regarded, their examples were to be carefully avoided.

4. *Heavy burdens*, &c. The scribes and Pharisees were exceedingly strict and harsh in enforcing the precepts of Moses, and the additions which had been made from time to time to his laws, and their strictness had respect rather to outward ceremonial observances, than to piety of heart. But strenuous as they were in enforcing a rigid obedience, they were very little concerned about rendering a personal obedience to their own precepts. While they imposed heavy burdens on others, they kept themselves from such burdensome obedience; so that, while others were loaded with burdens that required all their strength, *they* would not take a burden that could be moved with their finger; nor did they present those cheering encouragements which were needed, and which the Old Testament afforded to those who truly desired to serve God. Having loaded the people with intolerable burdens of ceremonial observances, and pushed very harshly and unrelentingly the claims of religion, they presented none of its mild features, and knew not how to exhibit the merciful promises of God.

5. *To be seen of men.* See 6: 1, 2, 5, 16. ‖ *Phylacteries.* In Deut. 6: 8, and 11: 18, the Hebrews were commanded to keep the law of God in constant remembrance. This idea is enforced in the language "Thou shalt bind them [Moses' instructions] for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes." The Pharisees, regarding the language rather than the spirit of the precept, placed pieces of parchment, on which were written four passages of Scripture, namely, Ex. 13: 1—10, 11—16, and Deut. 6: 4—9, 11: 13—21, on the back part of the left hand and on the forehead, between the eyes. These pieces of parchment were rolled up in a peculiar shape, were enclosed in a leather bag, and were bound on the hand and forehead by a leather thong. They superstitiously regarded these pieces of parchment as amulets or charms, and as having power to ward off evil, especially evil spirits. These were the phylacteries; and those which the Pharisees wore, they made, for a show of piety, uncommonly large. ‖ *Borders of their garments.* In Num. 15: 32—41, is an account of a man's having violated the Sabbath, and having been put to death in consequence of it. Immediately upon this event, the people were commanded to have fringes on the borders of their garments with a blue riband, as a means of reminding them of the Lord's statutes, and of their being distinguished from the heathen. To attract the notice of the people, and to gain reputation for piety, the Pharisees made these fringes uncommonly large.

6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,

7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.

8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, *even* Christ, and all ye are brethren.

9 And call no *man* your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, *even* Christ.

11 But he that is greatest among you, shall be your servant.

12 And whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.

13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in *yourselves*, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long pray-

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6. *Uppermost rooms.* The word *rooms* does not convey, at the present time, the precise idea of the original. Reference was not made by our Saviour to the different apartments of a house, but to the different parts of the couches on which the people reclined at their feasts. These couches were composed of two sides, and a part at one end connecting the sides; this upper part was the most honorable position. This chief part of the couch is what is here meant. ‖ *Chief seats.* The seats in the synagogues, nearest the spot where the sacred books were kept, were regarded as the most honorable.

7. *Greetings;* salutations. ‖ *Markets;* chief places of concourse. ‖ *Rabbi.* The scribes and Pharisees, being the religious teachers of the people. assumed to themselves titles of respect and dignity. *Rabbi* means, literally, *great*, that is, great teacher. Compare Mark 12: 38, 39. Luke 20: 46.

8. *Christ;* the Messiah. This word is here not a proper name, but a title of office.

9. *Call no man your father;* exercise a childlike reliance on no man as your ultimate and deciding authority. Only God is worthy thus to be confided in.

10. *Masters;* teachers, guides. The Messiah is your guide and teacher; it is not suitable for you to seek those distinctions and honors which, among men, are usually designated by such names. Let men be taught to regard the Messiah as the great leader; and do you claim no ambitious preferences.

11. *Your servant.* Humility and the spirit of usefulness compose the true dignity to which you ought to aspire. Let greatness be shown among you, by your cherishing deep humility and regard for the good of others. ‖ *Shall be;* that is, *let him be.* Compare 20: 25—28.

12. Compare Prov. 16: 18. James 4: 6. 1 Pet. 5: 5, 6.

13. *Hypocrites;* dissemblers, having a mere show of piety. ‖ *Ye shut up,* &c. Instead of helping men to attain the blessings of the new dispensation, or of the gospel, as religious teachers ought to do, you hinder them from attaining those blessings. You prevent the people from rightly judging of my instructions and seeking the blessings which I can bestow. Thus you produce the same effect, as if the keys of God's house were in your hand, and you would keep the door locked, and prevent admission.

14. *Devour widows' houses.* The word *houses* is here used for *possessions, property.* Widows, under the

er: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

16 Woe unto you, *ye* blind guides! which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor.

17 *Ye* fools, and blind! for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

19 *Ye* fools and blind! for

influence of the Pharisees' instructions, would give them, as an act of piety, portions of their property, and at death would bequeath property to them. Thus the Pharisees secured to themselves, as a pious gift, what the widows and their families ought justly to have retained. ‖ *Make long prayer.* They remained a long time in the attitude of prayer, making repetitions and long pauses, so as to attract attention. But such cruelty, concealed under such a garb, would meet with a terrible doom.

15. *Ye compass sea and land;* a proverbial expression, meaning, Ye make untiring efforts. It resembles our expression, You leave no stone unturned. ‖ *To make one proselyte;* to gain even one to your party. The Pharisees were bent on increasing the number of their followers, and spared no pains to secure that object. ‖ *The child of hell.* This expression means, according to the Hebrew manner of speaking, *a person exposed to* or *deserving of hell.* ‖ *Twofold more than yourselves;* twice as wicked as yourselves. Your manner of conducting towards him does him no good, but makes him doubly worse than yourselves. This effect was doubtless produced by the Pharisees' being more anxious for an external union to their party of a person from among the heathen, than for his real benefit. His former heathen notions were not corrected; he imbibed new errors; and a most corrupt example was set him by his teachers. No wonder he became doubly worse than they.

16. *Swear by the temple.* It was customary among the Jews to swear by a variety of objects; and the Pharisees made a distinction of oaths into great and small. Those oaths which they called *small*, might be violated (so they taught) without guilt. See on 5: 33. They were careful, in these distinctions, to have much regard to what might contribute to their own wealth or consequence. This is probably alluded to in this verse. ‖ *It is nothing;* it has no force; the oath is not binding. ‖ *The gold of the temple;* the golden ornaments or utensils of the temple, or the money contained in the treasury, gathered from the yearly tax for the support of the temple (see 17: 24), from the payment of vows, and from voluntary donations. An oath by this money was, probably, represented as binding a person, through a supposition of some uncommon sanctity pertaining to such money. By making these impressions on the people, the Pharisees, doubtless, greatly increased the wealth of the temple. ‖ *He is a debtor;* he is bound to fulfil his oath.

17. *Sanctifieth;* causeth it to be regarded as sacred, inasmuch as it was devoted to sacred purposes; just as we might regard money devoted to the spread of the gospel as sacred.

18. *By the gift that is upon it.* The Pharisees represented oblations and sacrifices as peculiarly sacred and acceptable to God. ‖ *He is guilty.* The ordinary meaning of the word *guilty*

whether *is* greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20 Whoso, therefore, shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint, and anise, and cumin, and have omitted the weightier *matters* of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24 *Ye* blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

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is not applicable here. The idea is not, that a person would be *criminal*, but that he *would be bound*, that is, to fulfil his oath. The word in the original is the same as the one translated *he is a debtor*, in the 16th verse.

20—22. Jesus showed the utter futility of the distinction which the Pharisees made between oaths. 5: 34, &c. An oath by the altar, he declared to be of the same force as an oath by an offering on the altar; inasmuch as an oath by the altar contained in it a reference to the use of the altar, and to whatever might be on it. If a person swore by the temple, his oath contained a recognition of Him to whom the temple had been dedicated; and was, therefore, of the same force as an oath in which the name of God was distinctly introduced. Just so an oath by heaven was by no means inferior to an oath in which His name was mentioned who sitteth on the heaven as his throne. In truth, the form of words in which an oath was couched, did not impart the obligation to observe the oath; a simple declaration which a person might make, ought to be just as true, and as binding, as if it was accompanied with an oath. But if he had used an oath with an implied intention of binding himself more strongly, the oath could not be innocently disregarded because the name of God was not expressly mentioned.

23. *Tithe;* the tenth part. The Hebrews were required to pay a tenth part of all their income for the support of the priests and Levites, and as an offering to God. See Lev. 27: 30. Num. 18: 21. Deut. 14: 22. This tithing of their property, the Pharisees carried to so great an extent of exactness, as to pay and enjoin the tithe of the very smallest herbs, as mint, &c. But while they were scrupulously exact in this matter, they neglected the moral injunctions of the law; thus having a mere show, while the reality of piety was neglected. ‖ *Judgment;* integrity, equity. ‖ *Mercy;* kindness. ‖ *Faith;* faithfulness to one's duties, or piety towards God. ‖ *These ought ye, &c.* This latter class of duties, the moral duties, ought to have been mostly regarded, while, at the same time, the other matters ought not to have been neglected. The Saviour did not censure the Pharisees for their great care in respect to tithing, but for preferring that to the exercise of moral virtues, and for neglecting the moral injunctions, while they professed and showed so strict a regard to these outward observances.

24. *Strain at a gnat, &c.* A proverbial expression, intimating that while they were exceedingly precise about trifles, they were regardless about truly important things: while they were scrupulous in avoiding little faults, without scruple they indulged in great ones. The Jews were in the habit of straining their wine, lest some small insect might be in it, either having fallen into it, or having been bred in it, as is often the case in vine-

25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26 *Thou* blind Pharisee, cleanse first that *which is* within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead *men's* bones, and of all uncleanness.

28 Even so ye, also, outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

30 And say, If we had been

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gar. *Strain at;* that is, *strain out.* The word *at* is thought to have been erroneously printed in the first edition of our translation instead of *out;* and subsequent editions followed the first. The idea is not, Ye find difficulty in swallowing a gnat, while ye can easily swallow a camel; but, Ye carefully strain out of your liquor a little gnat, while ye overlook and swallow down a camel. The language, of course, is hyperbolical, like the language of many common sayings; and on this account, it is more expressive of extreme carefulness in trifles, and of gross negligence in important matters.

25. *Full of extortion and excess;* filled with what you have gained by extortion or rapine, that is, the fruits of your extortion. The word *excess* might well be applied to the immoderate desire of the Pharisees for worldly gain, under the influence of which desire they possessed themselves of what they really had no just claim to. Instead, however, of the word translated *excess*, the best editions of the Greek Testament have a word which means *injustice;* so that the Saviour declared that their cups and dishes, however clean on the outside, were filled within with what they had rapaciously and unjustly gained from others. Compare the 14th verse. Thus they were scrupulously exact as to ceremonial observances, but were without scruples in respect to injustice and unkindness.

26. *Cleanse first;* see to it that what is within the dishes be free from guilt, be obtained in an upright manner, so that the outside may be truly clean. Let the contents be truly free from guilt, so that the vessel itself may have no guilt. For so long as the vessel is filled with fruits of rapine and injustice, ceremonial cleanness as to the outside is of no value. However clean the outside may be, if the cup contains what has been procured by rapine, the whole, both cup and food, is an unclean thing.

27. *Whited sepulchres.* The places for burying the dead among the Hebrews were large tombs. The doors of these, and other external parts, were whitewashed during the last month of every year, so as to make them conspicuous, and to prevent persons from approaching them and thus becoming contaminated; for the touch of a grave rendered a person unclean for seven days. See Num. 19: 16. The sepulchres were thus fair externally, but within they were full of uncleanness; for a dead body, or a bone, was regarded as unclean, and the touching of them rendered a person unclean.

28. *Even so ye.* Like these sepulchres were the scribes and Pharisees; outwardly, to the view of men, they were righteous; but in heart, and to the view of God, hypocritical and iniquitous.

29—31. *Because ye build,* &c. The

in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.

31 Wherefore, ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33 *Ye* serpents, *ye* generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes, and *some* of them ye shall kill and crucify, and *some* of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute *them* from city to city:

Saviour did not pronounce a woe upon the scribes and Pharisees, *because* they paid respect to the memory of the ancient prophets and righteous men, some of whom their fathers had put to death; but because, in building the sepulchres, and professing that they would not have committed the crimes of their fathers, they were hypocritical, and because they manifested a disposition similar to that of their fathers. The phrase *to be the son of a person*, may have, in the Hebrew idiom, a twofold meaning; namely, to be a descendant of such a person, or *to be like him in character*. These two meanings may also be combined. So these men acknowledged, by their actions and language, that they were descendants of those who killed the prophets; and the Saviour appears to have conveyed the implication, which would have been readily perceived by his hearers, that, in truth, they were their sons *in character*, as well as *by descent;* just as he said, in a parallel passage (Luke 11 : 48), Ye bear witness that *ye allow* [assent to] the deeds of your fathers.

32. *Fill ye, &c.* Go on, then, since you possess the disposition of your fathers, and are bent upon evil, go on and make full their measure of iniquity, so that divine judgments may overtake your nation. They would fill up the measure of iniquity by crucifying the Messiah, and abusing and putting to death his apostles and followers. The language here used is that of grief and of despair respecting their amendment and salvation, and of surrendering them to their own will.

33. *Serpents.* A serpent is an image of a crafty and hurtful man. ‖ *Generation of vipers;* rather, *offspring of vipers.* The term *viper*, when applied to a man, is of the same meaning as the word *serpent.* See 3 : 7. The Saviour thus strongly expressed his knowledge of these men's characters, and distinctly set before their own eyes the fact, that they were crafty and injurious men, notwithstanding their fair pretensions. Plain-dealing was greatly needed by them. Accustomed to respect and veneration, they were blind to their own faults, at least to the greatness of them; so long accustomed to wear a mask, it had become almost natural to them. And none but a teacher clothed with divine authority, was a suitable person to expose their hypocrisy and wickedness; to Jesus it rightly belonged, and he faithfully exposed their real characters. ‖ *The damnation of hell;* the punishments of the world of woe.

34. The Saviour proceeded to show the manner in which the nation would fill their measure of guilt, and bring upon themselves the vindictive judgments of heaven. He himself would send among them religious teachers: but the nation would abuse and persecute them in every variety of manner. Thus imitating their fathers, and having added sin to sin, from generation to generation, the accumulated wrath of God would at length be poured upon them. *Wherefore.* This word expresses here rather *a consequence* of the apostles' being sent among the Jews, than *the design* for which they would be sent. They would be sent, not *in order that*, by rejecting and put-

35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

ting them to death, the Jews might incur accumulated guilt. They would be sent *in order* to benefit the people; but one consequence of their being sent would be, that they would be rejected, and the nation would bring on themselves the judgments of heaven. ‖ *Prophets, wise men, and scribes.* These terms were in familiar use among the Jews, to express *religious teachers.* In this sense the words are here to be understood. Jesus referred to his apostles and others, who would be raised up as his ministers among the Jews. In the parallel passage of Luke 11: 49, we read "prophets and apostles." ‖ *Some of them, &c.*; ye will treat them with all sorts of indignity; with persecution and death. The book of the Acts of the Apostles sufficiently shows with what exactness this prediction of our Saviour's was fulfilled; and doubtless other instances of abuse and murder took place, which have not been handed down to our times. Compare Acts 4: 21. 5: 40. 7: 59. 8: 3. 9: 1. 12: 2, 3. 13: 45, 50. 17: 5, and many other places.

35. *That upon you may come, &c.* The word rendered *that*, often expresses *the consequence*, rather than *the design* of an action. Here the meaning is, *so that upon you will come, &c.* ‖ *Righteous Abel.* See Gen. 4: 8. ‖ *Zacharias, son of Barachias.* Without mentioning all the explanations which have been furnished of these words, two may be stated. The Saviour wished to bring under one view the murders of righteous men which had taken place in the world. He therefore selected one from the first book in the Old Testament, and one from the last book, as the books were arranged by the Jews. The last book in order, according to the Jews' arrangement, is the second of Chronicles. In that book (24: 20—22) is an account of a prophet named Zachariah, whom, for his faithful warnings, the people stoned to death in the court of the temple. This instance, probably, was selected on account of its aggravated nature. It is objected to this explanation, that the Zachariah mentioned in Chronicles was *the son of Jehoiada;* while the one whom Jesus mentioned, is called *son of Barachias.* This difficulty may be removed by the fact, that among the Jews, the same person frequently bore more names than one. Jehoiada may also have had the name *Barachias.* Another explanation of the passage is, that some time before the date at which Jesus was speaking, there was, probably, a very pious man, of the name here mentioned, put to death; the knowledge of which was possessed among the Jews, but which has not come down to our times. Without being able to decide definitely on this topic, it may be sufficient to know what the design of Jesus was; namely, to bring distinctly before the mind the numerous instances of bloodshed for righteousness' sake from the commencement of time to this day.

36. *Upon this generation.* In about forty years after Jesus thus spoke, Jerusalem was destroyed and the nation broken up, with immense slaughter and suffering. Guilt had been accumulating from age to age; the generation that would put Jesus to death and persecute and slay his apostles, would be the most criminal of any, and would receive the sorest visitation of divine wrath; so that upon this last generation, thus burdened with the crimes of preceding generations, would come the consummation of divine vengeance; as if guilt had been rolling on from age to age, and attained its height in this generation, and corresponding punishment had been

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, *thou* that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under *her* wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

CHAPTER XXIV.

AND Jesus went out and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to *him* for to show him the buildings of the temple.

2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples

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prepared, which, in all its height, would be suffered by this generation.

37. Affected by the prospect of calamity and ruin, Jesus vented his grief in a most pathetic exclamation.

38. *Your house;* your habitations. Desolation awaits your abodes. Perhaps there was special reference to the desolation of the temple. It was the temple in which they gloried; and in no more forcible way could a general desolation be expressed, than by selecting the temple as particularly to be laid waste.

39. *Blessed is he, &c.* This was the exclamation of the multitudes when Jesus entered Jerusalem (21 : 9), and it was an acknowledgment of him as the Messiah. The idea, then, of the Saviour, in this verse, was, Ye shall not have my presence among you, till ye acknowledge me as the Messiah. This he knew they never would do, so that his language amounts to this, Your safety depends upon receiving me as the Messiah; this you are resolved not to do; and I shall depart from you. Ye shall be wholly rejected.

PRACTICAL HINTS. 1. Men's true characters are seen rather in their conduct than in their precepts. v. 3.

2. Let us guard against a vain desire for human applause. vs. 5—11.

3. Humility is the best ornament, and the best preparation for divine regard. v. 12.

4. Learn the necessity and value of true, vital godliness, as an inward principle controlling the character.

5. Dreadful must be the consequences of falling into the hands of God while in our sins. vs. 38, 39.

6. Rejection, or a neglect, of Christ, as a Saviour, must ruin the soul.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1. *To show him the buildings of the temple.* The temple of Jerusalem was a magnificent structure, having such a variety of apartments and such buildings connected with it, as the religious service of the Jews rendered necessary. By comparing Mark 13: 1, and Luke 21: 5, it will appear that the disciples spoke in admiration of the temple. The *stones* are particularly mentioned, and Josephus informs us, that the temple was built of stones, which were white and strong, the length of each being twenty-five cubits, the height eight, and the breadth about twelve. A cubit is generally reckoned as equal to a foot and a half.

2. *Thrown down.* Josephus relates, that, after the city was taken, the Roman commander gave orders to demolish the entire city and temple, reserving three principal towers and the city wall on the west side. The rest of the wall was laid even with the ground, and such a desolation was made that a person would hardly believe the city had ever been inhabited.

3. *The mount of Olives.* See on

came unto him, privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? And what *shall be* the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

4 And Jesus answered, and

21: 1. This elevation commanded a view of the city and the temple. ‖ *Privately.* From Mark 13: 3, it appears that four of the disciples came to make their inquiries. ‖ *Tell us, &c.* Three inquiries seem to be proposed by the disciples to Jesus: 1. When will the prediction be accomplished? 2. What will be the sign of thy coming? 3. What will be the sign of the end of the world? The second and third inquiries, however, were, in the apprehension of the disciples, but one. For they, probably, like many of the Jews, expected that what they called *the end of the world* would take place at the coming of the Messiah in his royal state. By *the end of the world*, they probably meant some great changes in the present order of things, and the establishment of a new order of things on earth, under the Messiah, after which he would enter triumphantly on his administration, bringing all nations under his control. According to Jewish notions, this glorious *terrestrial* reign, after a very long duration, was to issue in the everlasting *celestial* reign, when the righteous would enjoy consummate bliss, and the wicked be consigned with Satan to utter misery. In replying to their inquiries, however, Jesus did not regard their errors, except in an incidental way, removing them by giving correct information about the final judgment and the end of the world. The discourse of our Saviour, occasioned by these inquiries, occupies the remainder of the 24th chapter and the whole of the 25th. It is very possible, that the disciples proposed additional questions to him during his remarks; so that the different divisions of his discourse might have been more plain to them than they can be to us. Perhaps, too, we have not the whole of what he said, but only the most important portions. There is much difficulty in framing a correct interpretation of these two chapters; and accordingly, in regard to different portions, there is much diversity of opinion on the question, whether they relate to the Saviour's coming for the destruction of Jerusalem, or to his coming for the final judgment of the world. This diversity of opinion is occasioned by the nature of the language, which is highly figurative and poetic; and by the absence of those definite marks of transition which greatly aid in understanding a discourse, and which the disciples perhaps perceived. In these circumstances, it becomes a person to proceed with no little diffidence, in expressing his views of this discourse. The following appears to me a correct analysis. In vs. 4—28, Jesus informed the disciples that the destruction of which he had spoken, was not to take place immediately, but that various events were to occur, which ought to be regarded as premonitory of that great catastrophe. In view of these events, he gave various cautions for regulating the conduct of his followers; cautions which were necessary, because, notwithstanding these preliminary events, which could not but seem portentous of ruin, the desolation of the city and temple would at last come suddenly on the mass of the people. Having thus shown what would precede the destruction of the city, and of course what should be regarded as signs of that event, he proceeded, in vs. 29—31, to describe, in the style of the ancient Hebrew prophets, the downfall of the city and nation by the Messiah's coming in divine providence; and to give assurance that his followers should be rescued from the destruction. In the 32d verse, he commenced an exhortation, enjoining on his disciples to notice the preliminary events, and to take seasonable warning; inasmuch as the precise day of the destruction was not to be revealed, and on the great mass of the nation it would come

said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.

5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.

6 And ye shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.

8 All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

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unawares. While giving these injunctions as to watchfulness, in view of the destruction of the city, the Saviour passed on, insensibly as it were, to the duty of watchfulness in general, in respect to another coming of the Son of man, in which *all* would be concerned; namely, his coming at the end of the world. To this the Saviour could easily pass, as the disciples had probably, in their minds, connected the two events together; and the proper distinction between them could be happily made by the nature of his exhortations, those which related to the latter being of a more general character. The exhortation thus enlarged, and leading onward to the final coming of the Messiah, extends to the 30th verse of the 25th chapter; and then commences a description of the general judgment of the world, the closing of the present dispensation, and the entering of all men on the endless retributions, for bliss or for woe, of the future world.

Thus he replied to all the inquiries of his disciples. His replies were eminently practical, without indulging the curiosity of his disciples. Hence he said nothing specific in respect to the continuance of the world after the coming of the Messiah to destroy Jerusalem. But by his continued and repeated exhortations, he let them know that, at the appointed period, there will come an end of the world, for which they ought to be prepared, so as to render up their account. But *when* this end would be, it was not necessary for them, nor for any men, to know, since, as to all practical purposes, the day of one's death is as important to him as the day of the world's dissolution.

5. *In my name;* assuming my dignity. ‖ *Saying, I am Christ;* pretending to be the Messiah. Many, accordingly, did pretend to be the Messiah, between the death of Jesus and the destruction of Jerusalem. They were deceivers, whose objects were solely selfish and worldly; exciting among the people the spirit of insurrection, and provoking the violent interference of the Roman power.

6. *Wars, and rumors of wars.* For some time before the destruction of Jerusalem, the land of Palestine and the surrounding regions were in much military commotion. ‖ *The end;* the end of the Jewish state.

7. *Nation shall rise,* &c. The particulars specified in this verse are images of troublesome times. There were also many civil disturbances both in and around Palestine at the time spoken of. There were also distressing famines; twice in Rome, once in Greece, and once in Palestine. Pestilences are a frequent accompaniment of famines. Some remarkable earthquakes are also recorded as having taken place a few years before the destruction of Jerusalem.

9. *Hated of all nations;* very generally hated, not only by Jews, but also by the Gentiles. The troubles peculiar to the Saviour's followers are here mentioned.

10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.

15 When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place,

10. *Be offended;* be induced to renounce their professed attachment to me, and become hostile to my true followers.

11. *False prophets;* pretended religious teachers.

12. *Iniquity — the love of many, &c.* The great prevalence of impiety shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem, and the cruel treatment which the adversaries of the Messiah's followers would exercise towards them, would, the Saviour predicted, chill mutual love, make men more anxious about their own safety than about the good of others, and cool their love to their Master. Iniquity did indeed attain a fearful height among the Jews just before the destruction of their city.

13. *Unto the end;* that is, of his life. It was also true that the persecutions and calamities which the followers of Christ would suffer in consequence of their attachment to him would furnish a severe test of their characters; and if they should abide this trial, and maintain their Christian integrity to the end of these sufferings, they would have very satisfactory evidence of true love to Christ and of final salvation. The sufferings of many, too, would end only with their lives. ‖ *Endure;* that is, in attachment to me. Such a person would certainly enjoy salvation, while apostates would fail of eternal life. See 10 : 22.

14. *This gospel of the kingdom;* the announcement of the Messiah's reign, and the doctrines of his religion. See on 4 : 23. ‖ *In all the world;* very extensively, throughout Palestine, the neighboring regions, and the Roman empire in general. This expression was frequently used to denote the Roman empire. There is satisfactory evidence, that some years before the destruction of Jerusalem, the gospel was preached in all the countries around Palestine; in Egypt, Ethiopia, and other parts of Africa; very extensively in Asia, and in various parts of Europe. ‖ *For a witness to all nations;* so that testimony to the truth may be very extensively borne. ‖ *The end;* that is, of the Jewish state.

15. *The abomination of desolation;* the desolating abomination, or the abominable destroyer. The Roman army was meant, by which Jerusalem and the temple were to be destroyed. Compare Luke 21 : 20. This name was given to it on account of its being a heathen army, invading the soil, and destroying the building, which had been regarded as peculiarly sacred. ‖ *By Daniel the prophet;* Dan. 9 : 26, 27. ‖ *In the holy place.* The country of Palestine was sometimes called *holy*, because it was inhabited by the people whom the Lord had *set apart* for himself; but more particularly the city Jerusalem and the country around it were called *holy*, on account of the temple's being situated in Jerusalem. The immediate vicinity of Jerusalem was probably meant by our Lord. In this verse, he began to give his disciples special directions respecting their conduct when they should see the Roman army encamped near Jerusalem. Instead of the ex-

(whoso readeth, let him understand:)

16 Then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains:

17 Let him which is on the house-top not come down to take any thing out of his house:

18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.

19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the Sabbath-day:

21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.

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pression *holy place*, Mark (13:14) uses the more general expression "*where it ought not.*" ‖ *Whoso readeth*, &c. This clause, in a parenthesis, appears to have been thrown in by the evangelist, so as to excite the readers of his times to greater attention. It was important that each one should particularly note this commencement of certain ruin to the city, so that he might take suitable and seasonable measures for escape.

16. *Into the mountains;* the mountainous tracts in the vicinity of Judea. In these ridges of mountains there were extensive caverns, affording a safe retreat. When the Romans, at an early period of the war, were besieging Jerusalem, a favorable opportunity presented for taking it, by some of the people within opening the gates. But the Roman general, suspecting the designs of the people, unexpectedly withdrew from the city. The Christians in the city and other prudent citizens took warning and fled to Pella and to other places beyond the Jordan. In besieging the city, Titus at first encamped at so great a distance from it, as was favorable to the escape of those who desired to flee. He permitted those who wished to escape to pass through his camp and go wherever they chose.

17. It would be requisite to make all possible haste in fleeing from the scene of danger. *On the house-top.* The roofs of houses in Palestine were nearly flat, and afforded a suitable place for taking a view of what might be passing. Such a place would be frequently resorted to, when an invading army was near. ‖ *Not come down.* The steps leading to the roof of a house were on the outside. It was also possible to pass from house to house on the roofs, till a person should arrive at the city wall. Thus, in order to escape, there was no need of coming down into the house. The Saviour directed, that his followers should make their escape as soon as possible, without losing any time in collecting their goods.

18. *To take his clothes.* Should a person be laboring in the field without his full dress, let him not return to his house, lest he should be overtaken by the enemy, or be shut up in the city. Let him flee at once.

20. *In the winter.* The wintry season in Palestine was peculiarly unfavorable for travelling. The roads were in a bad condition, and storms were very frequent. ‖ *On the Sabbath-day.* A person attempting to flee would be more easily detected on the Sabbath, and the Jews might prevent his escape. Many, too, might be hindered from fleeing, by a superstitious reverence for the Jewish Sabbath; or by applying to the Christian Sabbath some of the superstitious views in which, as Jews, they had been educated.

21. *Great tribulation.* The troubles experienced by the Jews during the siege by the Roman army were altogether unexampled. Josephus, the Jewish historian, remarks, that if the misfortunes of all men, from the beginning of the world, should be com-

22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here *is* Christ, or there, believe *it* not.

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

25 Behold, I have told you before.

26 Wherefore, if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert, go not forth: Behold, *he is* in the secret chambers, believe *it* not.

27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

28 For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together.

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pared with those of the Jews, they would appear far inferior.

22. *Shortened.* The time occupied in the siege and destruction of the city would be made comparatively short. Jerusalem possessed great advantages for defence against a besieging army; and a protracted siege would naturally be expected. But divine providence would order otherwise. And accordingly, when the city fell, the commander of the Roman army was struck with admiration at the event. ‖ *No flesh be saved;* the whole nation would be cut off. Such were the sufferings by famine and intestine commotions, that had the time been protracted, there would have been an entire destruction. ‖ *For the elect's sake;* for the sake of Christians, chosen and beloved of God. While war should be raging in the country, they would necessarily share in the privations and dangers incident to such a state of things.

23. *Here is Christ;* here is the Messiah. The Jews cherished the vain hope, that in the midst of their troubles, the Messiah would appear, and rescue them from their enemies.

24. *False Christs;* false, pretended Messiahs. ‖ *False prophets;* religious teachers falsely pretending to a divine commission. ‖ *Show great signs;* pretend to perform miracles. The *great signs* would be "lying wonders." ‖ *The very elect;* even the Christians.

26. *He;* the Messiah. ‖ *Is in the desert.* Some would give out word that the Messiah was in the desert, preparing for the rescue of the Jews, and wishing the Jews to come to him and join his forces. ‖ *He is in the secret chambers;* in the retired apartments of some house, with his confidential friends, and soon to make his appearance. Impostors would contrive various ways to draw followers after them.

27. All the pretences just spoken of were, the Saviour taught, to be disregarded. For when the Messiah should actually come, there would be no such thing as a going forth to meet him; there would be no messengers to announce him. But, as the lightning, in the midst of the darkness and blackness of the storm, suddenly flashes forth, so amid the terrors surrounding the city, would the Son of man, on a sudden, come in his vengeance. And as it cannot be said of the lightning, It is here, or, It is there; so will it be in respect to the Son of man; he will break forth at length suddenly, and at once make a wide destruction, before there shall be time scarcely to think of what is taking place.

28. And as an eagle, discerning his prey, darts on it suddenly, so will the Messiah come; leaving no time for any to announce his coming, and leaving no time then for escape from his vengeance. Jesus here referred to his coming, by means of the Roman army, to destroy Jerusalem. Under

29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken.

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory.

31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet; and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

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the general name *eagle*, the Bible includes the *vulture*, a well-known bird of prey.

29. *Immediately;* very shortly after the troubles spoken of, or, as Mark says (13: 24), *in those days.* ‖ *Shall the sun be darkened*, &c. This language is strikingly similar to that which the Hebrew prophets were in the habit of using, when they predicted or described such signal calamities as the overthrow of a city or of a nation. In their boldly figurative mode of speaking, they represent the heavens and the earth as in commotion, and all nature as reverting to chaos. We need not, then, seek for an explanation of each particular, in such a description; but are to regard the whole description as exhibiting a universal ruin, a crashing of all the powers of nature, such as would take place in the event of the putting out of the sun and of the moon, of the falling down of the stars, even of all the heavenly host. ‖ *Powers of the heavens;* the host of heaven, the heavenly luminaries, as in Gen. 2: 1. The phrase seems to be here employed as summing up the several particulars mentioned just before. For the use of similar figures, to express overwhelming calamities and universal changes, see Is. 13: 10, where the fall of the city of Babylon was predicted, and its ruin likened to the state of things which would follow the darkening of the sun and moon, and the ceasing of the stars of heaven to shine. See also Is. 24: 23. 34: 4; also Ezek. 32: 7, where calamities to fall on Egypt are predicted. See also Amos 8: 9; and Joel 2: 28—31, compared with Acts 2: 17—20.

30. *Shall appear the sign of the Son of man;* the Messiah will reveal himself (see Luke 17: 30); will show publicly and clearly that he has come. There shall be a proof that he has come. ‖ *Tribes of the earth;* more properly, *tribes of the land;* the Jews, the unbelieving Jews. ‖ *The Son of man coming;* that is, by the instrumentality of the Roman army to destroy Jerusalem. When God interposes, by whatever means, for the rescue of his people and the overthrow of his foes, similar language is employed to express his interposition. See Deut. 33: 26. Ps. 18: 9—11. Is. 19: 1. ‖ *They shall see.* The attending events will show that the Messiah has come.

31. *And he shall send his angels.* Angels are spoken of as the ministers of divine providence, the instruments by which God accomplishes his purposes. See Ps. 34: 7. 91: 11, 12. ‖ *With a great sound of a trumpet.* The language is metaphorical. The angels are spoken of as accomplishing the purposes of God in respect to the deliverance of his people; and, to complete the figure, they are furnished with trumpets. so as to awaken attention, and to make known, and summon to, a place of safety. ‖ *His elect;* his chosen people, the followers of Christ Those of them who lived in Jerusalem and the vicinity would be made special objects of divine protection in this season of peril; by taking timely warning, and fleeing to the mountains (v. 16), under the divine care they would be safe. ‖ *From the four winds, from one end*, &c.; that is, from every quarter. See Ezek. 37: 9. Luke 13: 29.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer *is* nigh.

33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors.

34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.

35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

36 But of that day and hour knoweth no *man*, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.

37 But as the days of Noe *were*, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For, as in the days that were before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,

39 And knew not, until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

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32. *A parable;* instruction by way of resemblance. The Saviour was now on the mount of Olives, which abounded with fig-trees as well as with olives.

33. *These things;* particularly the things spoken of in vs. 5—12, 24. ‖ *It is near;* the ruin predicted in v. 2. Luke (21 : 28) says, "*your redemption draweth nigh;*" that is, the deliverance of Christians from the persecutions of the Jews. This would be connected with the overthrow of their city. In v. 31, Luke also says, "the kingdom of God is nigh at hand;" that is, the Messiah's reign will then be established, the new dispensation will have triumphed over its deadly foes, and the Messiah will reign gloriously in the extension of his cause.

34. *This generation*, &c. The destruction of Jerusalem and of the Jewish state, happened about forty years from the time the Saviour was speaking this prophecy; so that many who were then alive, and were daily seeing the temple in its glory, lived to behold its desolation, and to experience the calamities connected with its destruction.

35. *Heaven and earth;* the visible creation. Though this visible creation shall perish (2 Pet. 3 : 7, 10), yet my predictions shall stand; a strong assertion of the certainty of the events predicted. Compare 5 : 18.

36. *Of that day and hour*, &c.; of the precise day (compare v 50) no one but God knows. General information was given, namely, that the time would be during the lives of some then living; but a more particular designation was withholden. Mark (13 : 32) says, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father." Jesus here probably spoke of himself, in his capacity as a prophet, authorized to communicate the will of God; he spoke in respect to his human nature.

37. *The days of Noe;* the time when Noah lived, particularly just before the flood. See Gen. 6 : 5—7.

38. *Eating and drinking*, &c.; regardless of the calamity which awaited them.

39. *Knew not;* considered not, were inattentive to the warnings of God. Thus it would be, the Saviour said, at the time when he should come to execute vengeance on the Jews. And thus it was; for though calamities were thickening around them, and the Roman army was drawing nearer and nearer, multitudes of the Jews were cherishing the vain confidence, that these very troubles were assurances

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

41 Two *women shall be* grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

42 Watch, therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

43 But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

44 Therefore, be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh.

45 Who, then, is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

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of the speedy coming of the Messiah as their conquering prince, and that deliverance would arise to them by his sudden appearing to rout the Roman army.

40, 41. Some would still be engaged in the ordinary affairs of life, not expecting the final calamity which awaited them; and while thus occupied, sudden destruction would come on them, so that scarcely any would escape. Two might be together in a field; but so unexpected and so general would be the calamity, that only one of them would escape. So of two grinding at a mill. *Women.* Mills were among the Hebrews driven by the hand; and two persons, generally women, were employed in the operation. The mill consisted of two circular stones; the lower one having a slight elevation in the centre, the upper, in order to fit to the lower, being slightly hollowed. In the middle of the upper was a hole, into which the grain was put. To the upper a handle was attached, by which it was turned round; one person pushing it half-way, and the other pulling it wholly round. Compare Luke 17: 35.

42. *Ye know not*, &c. Since no information could be given of the precise hour when judgment upon the nation would be consummated, it was incumbent on all to be in a waiting posture, to take seasonable warning, and to be habitually ready. The Saviour so shaped his language here, as to make it applicable at all times, and to all men, and thus prepared the minds of his hearers for exhortations which have particular respect to each one's end of life, and each one's being called to judgment; and thus he passed on, in his discourse, to give information respecting the general judgment at the end of the world.

43, 44. The Saviour first noticed, in the way of illustration, that if a master of a family knew the particular time at which a thief would come, he would put himself in readiness. But since no information is given, as to the precise time of the Lord's coming, either for the destruction of Jerusalem, or for the end of the world, or (which to each individual is, for all practical purposes, the same) for calling each one to his account, it is incumbent on each to be habitually in a watchful frame of mind; lest the Lord should come when the person was off his guard. *Good man of the house;* an old expression for *head of the family*, or *master of the house.* ‖ *In what watch.* The night was divided into four watches. See on 14: 25. ‖ *House to be broken up.* See on 6: 19.

45. The Saviour next inculcated diligence in duty, and watchfulness, by noticing the manner in which a servant would be treated by his master who had entrusted him with a particular charge. *Who then is*, &c. This question is equivalent to the expression *If a servant is faithful and wise.* See a similar expression in James 3: 13. Deut. 20: 5. ‖ *His lord hath made ruler;* to whom his master hath given authority as a superintendent, to direct the other ser-

46 Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49 And shall begin to smite *his* fellow-servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken:

50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth.

CHAPTER XXV.

THEN shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps,

vants. ‖ *His household;* family of servants. When there was a number of servants in a family, one was selected to have charge over the rest. A peculiar responsibility thus rested on him; and it became him to be prudent and watchful. ‖ *To give them meat;* to furnish provisions.

46. *So doing;* intent on the business entrusted to him. ‖ *Blessed;* happy. His master will honor him.

47. *Ruler over all his goods;* put into his charge all his affairs. Compare Gen. 24: 2. Such a servant would be promoted to a more honorable station. Having conducted properly in the charge of steward of the servants, so as to furnish them seasonably with provisions, he would be promoted to the higher office of a general superintendence over his master's affairs. Thus watchfulness in spiritual concerns will be approved by our heavenly Master, and will secure to us his continued and increased favor.

48. *Evil servant.* But should a servant thus entrusted prove himself bad, and neglect his master's orders, and abuse his office, he would surely be detected, and consigned to merited punishment.

51. *Cut him asunder;* severely punish him. This manner of speaking was drawn from a mode of punishment which was practised in some Eastern nations. Different parts of the body were cut off, as, for instance, the left hand and the right foot; or the right hand and the left foot; or both feet and hands were cut off at the joints. ‖ *The hypocrites;* those servants who have been detected as unfaithful, as merely pretending to render service, but being in reality unworthy of confidence, and therefore consigned to punishment. ‖ *Gnashing of teeth;* extreme anguish.

Reflection. Let us all be impressed with the need of constant watchfulness, and habitual readiness for the coming of our Lord. Whether we are in public life, or private, we have a trust committed to us; and it is only by being habitually occupied in our duties, that we shall be ready for our Lord's approach. We do not, indeed, now expect the speedy dissolution of the world; but we are all exposed at every moment to death; and death is to each one as really the end of his probation, as if the world should, at his departure, have actually come to an end.

CHAPTER XXV.

1. *Then;* at that time, when the Messiah shall be entering upon the consummation of his reign. The Saviour proceeded in his exhortations, directing his disciples to the final coming, which, as being the final redemption of his people and overthrow of his adversaries, would be intimately connected in his mind with the coming to destroy Jerusalem. In the disciples' minds, the two

and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

2 And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

3 They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:

4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out.

9 But the wise answered, saying, *Not so;* lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.

11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

13 Watch, therefore, for ye

events were probably united; and it was not material specially to correct their misconception, as the Saviour's object was the practical benefit of his disciples and followers, and they would soon learn to distinguish between the two events. ‖ *The kingdom of heaven;* the Messiah's administration consummated; the state of glory. ‖ *To meet the bridegroom.* The importance of being habitually ready for the coming of the Lord, is urged by an allusion to the manner of performing marriage ceremonies among the Jews. On such occasions a sumptuous feast was prepared, and the celebration usually occupied a week. The bridegroom, clothed in the festival-robe, attended by a company of young men of about his own age, with music, conducted from her father's house the bride, who was also accompanied by virgins of her own age. to his father's house, or to the house where the nuptial entertainment was to be given. In case this was done in the evening, the procession was furnished with suitable torches. ‖ *Went forth.* It is said to have been the practice for the female friends of the bride to go forth some time before the bridegroom and bride, and to wait for them at a proper place. When notice was given that the bridegroom was approaching, the female friends could then arise to meet and join the procession. Ten was probably the usual number of virgins who performed this service; some say the number was never less than ten.

3. *Lamps.* What are here called *lamps*, were probably flambeaux or torches. They consisted of small bars of iron or brass, inserted into a stick, to which pieces of linen dipped in oil were fastened. The bottom of the stick was furnished with a small vessel of brass or iron, to receive the oil that would flow down from the burning linen.

5. *While the bridegroom tarried.* The case is here supposed, that some unexpected delay detained the bridegroom.

11. *Lord, Lord.* These are the terms by which the virgins addressed the bridegroom, or sent in a message to him; equivalent to our form of address, Sir, sir.

12. *I know you not;* I acknowledge you not; you were not among my attendants and friends.

13. This verse contains the point of instruction illustrated by the para-

know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

14 For *the kingdom of heaven is* as a man travelling into a far country, *who* called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.

15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

16 Then he that had received the five talents, went and traded with the same, and made *them* other five talents.

17 And, likewise, he that *had received* two, he also gained other two.

18 But he that had received one, went, and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.

19 After a long time, the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.

20 And so he that had received five talents, came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold, I have gained besides them five talents more.

21 His lord said unto him, Well done, *thou* good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

22 He, also, that had received two talents, came, and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I

ble; namely, heedless and unwatchful persons will be rejected.

14. By another similitude, the Saviour showed the need of every one's paying a diligent and watchful attention to his duties, as the Lord's servant. All will be called to an account, and will be dealt with according to the manner in which they have regarded the trust committed to them. *The kingdom of heaven;* the future state of glory, the consummation of the Messiah's administration on earth. The manner in which the retributions of eternity will be awarded is represented by the manner in which a person having been long absent from his accustomed residence, and having assigned to his servants certain duties with the requisite means of performing those duties, called those servants to account, and awarded to each a recompense suited to the conduct of each. ‖ *His goods;* his property.

15. *Talents.* The word *talent* was a pecuniary term, like our word *dollar*, only it was of a much larger amount. According to some estimates, a talent was equal to fifteen hundred dollars of our money; according to others, it was worth nine hundred or a thousand dollars. As here used, the word merely signifies a large and adequate amount of property. None of the servants was left without the means of accomplishing much for his master; and these means were proportioned to the circumstances and ability of each.

19. *The lord;* the master. ‖ *Reckoneth;* makes settlement.

20. *Lord;* master, or sir.

21. *I will make thee ruler over many things;* I will give thee increased authority; I will promote thee to a higher station. ‖ *Enter thou into the joy of thy lord;* enter upon the enjoyment which thy master has prepared for thee. The Saviour probably meant to represent the master as having provided a sumptuous entertainment for his faithful servants, as a token of his approbation, and as a sort of pledge of continued enjoyment to be expected by them.

have gained two other talents besides them.

23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.

24 Then he which had received the one talent, came, and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strowed:

25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, *there* thou hast *that is* thine.

26 His lord answered and said unto him, *Thou* wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strowed:

27 Thou oughtest, therefore, to have put my money to the exchangers, and *then*, at my coming, I should have received mine own, with usury.

28 Take, therefore, the talent from him, and give *it* unto him which hath ten talents.

29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall

24. *Hard;* severe. || *Strowed;* probably the operation of *winnowing* was alluded to. The grain, after being threshed, was thrown up against the wind, so as to cleanse and separate it from the chaff. The servant accused his master of being so severe and unreasonable as to demand of his laborers a crop without having sown the seed, and a heap of grain without winnowing; that is, of being so unreasonable as to demand certain results, without having provided the requisite means. The servant employed a vivid, proverbial manner of expressing this thought.

25. *I was afraid;* afraid that I could not equal thy expectations.

26. *Wicked and slothful servant.* His master traced his conduct to its right source, an evil and indolent disposition; not the lack of means and opportunities for doing as his master wished, nor an expectation on the part of his master disproportionate to the means in his power.

27. *The exchangers;* money-changers; brokers, who were accustomed to hire money and pay a premium. || *With usury;* with interest. The word *usury*, in the Bible, does not necessarily mean unlawful, or exorbitant, interest. The servant's very confession conveyed in it his condemnation. If his master had been an unreasonable man, demanding an altogether disproportionate income, so that the servant must despair of equalling his master's expectations, this was no reason why he should have done nothing at all with the money that had been entrusted to him; it was no reason why he should have neglected some most obvious and easy methods of making his master's money turn to profit. But in truth, he was badly disposed towards his master, and was altogether an indolent servant. The mention of exchangers, by whose means this servant might have rendered his master's deposit valuable, merely shows, in the application of the parable to our spiritual condition, that no man, however few the abilities bestowed on him, is destitute of sufficient and ample means of acceptably serving God and coming at length to eternal bliss; and thus that no one has an excuse for not pleasing God that is worthy of being named.

29. *For every one*, &c. It is a general principle of the divine government, that every one who has advantages and rightly uses them, shall receive additional advantages; while he, who has no advantages, or rather neglects to

have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.

30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping, and gnashing of teeth.

31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.

32 And before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth *his* sheep from the goats:

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employ what he has, will not only deprive himself of the happiness which those advantages might have secured, but is even in danger of losing the advantages themselves. A rich man, by sagaciously employing his wealth, becomes richer still; a poor man, despising the slender means which he has, and indulging in indolence and improvidence, becomes poorer still. This principle is of general application, both to temporal things and to spiritual; and ought never to be forgotten in respect to the account which we must all give to our heavenly Master.

30. *Outer darkness;* extreme wretchedness. For the origin of this manner of speaking, see Matt. 8: 12. 22: 13. The parallel passages relative to the coming of the Lord, are Mark 13: 1—36. Luke 21: 5—36. 17: 22—37.

Remarks. We all have means and opportunities of acceptably serving God. If we do serve him by a right use of these means and opportunities, he will bestow his approbation, and make us truly happy. If we do not serve him, we shall subject ourselves to certain and deserved punishment, as being entirely destitute of a reasonable excuse. Still further, it is not necessary, for our condemnation, that we grossly *abuse* our privileges; if we are *unprofitable* servants, merely neglecting the advantages within our reach, we shall be condemned. It is worthy of distinct notice, that only the negligent, and those who abuse the advantages they enjoy, are inclined to find fault with the Lord's administration; candid, well-disposed, and industrious servants of God find nothing in his character or administration, but what tends to increase their esteem and attachment for him, and their desire still and forever to serve him. If we are disposed to censure the dealings of God, to find fault with his character and claims, and to think him a hard master, the difficulty lies in our own hearts; and a day is coming, which will completely vindicate the character and government of God, and which will cover with eternal shame those who have failed to serve God, and have cherished dishonorable thoughts respecting him.

In view of the truths developed in this parable, how necessary it is that we be habitually diligent in the Lord's service; and that we hold ourselves in habitual readiness to give up our account! For to an account we shall be called. To a distinct notice of the great day when we must be summoned to judgment, the Saviour immediately proceeded.

31. *In his glory;* in majesty. The Messiah is here represented as a king coming in royal state. || *All the holy angels with him.* As kings, on great and special occasions, make their appearance attended by their high officers, so the Messiah will come to judgment, attended by holy angels as ministers of his will. || *The throne of his glory;* his glorious throne. He will appear as a king, to pronounce judgment.

32. *Sheep from the goats.* Sheep, from their distinctive qualities, are here employed as representing the righteous. Sheep are considered as innocent and cleanly animals: the word is elsewhere used to designate the truly righteous, the followers of Christ. See the 10th chapter of John

33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.

34 Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

35 For I was a hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me in:

36 Naked, and ye clothed me; I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.

37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, and fed *thee?* or thirsty, and gave *thee* drink?

38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took *thee* in? or naked, and clothed *thee?*

39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?

40 And the king shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done *it* unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done *it* unto me.

41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:

42 For I was a hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:

43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.

On the contrary, goats are considered as uncleanly animals. Among the Jews, the terms *unclean* and *sinful* were of similar import; so that the word *goat* was well adapted to express a *wicked man.*

33. *Right hand;* as expressing his approbation. It was usual, among the ancients, to regard the right hand, or the right side, as indicating favor. To see a thing on the right, was a good omen. So *the left hand* was indicative of misery, of bad results.

34. *The king;* the Messiah, who will act as judge. John 5: 27. Rom. 14: 10. 2 Cor. 5: 10. ‖ *Inherit;* take possession of. ‖ *The kingdom;* the royal state, the state of glory and bliss. The highest earthly dignity is not too great to represent the future recompense of the Saviour's followers. See Rev. 1: 6. ‖ *Prepared;* appointed. ‖ *From the foundation of the world.* Compare Eph. 1: 4, 5.

35. *A hungered,* hungry. ‖ *Meat.* The word *meat* in the Bible is of more extensive meaning than among us at the present time. It signifies *food,* and is applicable to *bread,* as well as to *animal food.* See Gen. 40: 17. In this verse and in the following, Jesus represented himself as having been in various kinds of distress, and the righteous as always ready to manifest their love to him.

37—39. The modesty and humility of the truly righteous are most happily portrayed here.

40. *The least, &c.* Jesus dignified with the name of *brethren* all his followers; and here he particularly spoke of those who had been in lowly and afflicted circumstances, neglected and despised by some men, but who had been relieved by their more favored fellow-disciples. Compare 12: 49, 50. 10: 40. See also Prov. 19: 17.

41. *Fire.* An emblem of severe punishment. ‖ *His angels;* the fallen angels (see 2 Peter 2: 4, and Jude 6),

44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee a hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?

45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did *it* not to one of the least of these, ye did *it* not to me.

46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AND it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

2 Ye know that after two days is *the feast of* the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

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of whom Satan is the prince. See 12: 24.

44. The unsubmissive and self-confident spirit of the wicked, seeking for excuses and exercising self-vindication, is here brought to view.

46. *Everlasting punishment — life eternal.* The word translated *everlasting*, in this verse, is the same, in the original, as the word translated *eternal.* The same word expresses the duration of the punishment in one case, as expresses the duration of *life*, that is, happiness, in the other. The decisions of the day of judgment, whether for weal or for woe, are irreversible, and our whole existence, after that day, will be regulated by the decisions of that day. In view of such a judgment, what manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness! See 2 Pet. 3: 10—14.

In this description of the last judgment, deeds of benevolence toward suffering followers of Christ are described as securing the favor of the judge; and the failure to have performed such deeds, as bringing condemnation. The fundamental reason of this is, that the performance of such deeds in the spirit which is hinted at in vs. 37—39, is a proof of love to Christ; and these instances of obedience and duty are to be regarded as a part taken for the whole. If a person have the love to Christ which will prompt him to such acts of benevolence, he has the love which will produce a general obedience to the will of Christ; he has a *state of heart* which is acceptable to the Searcher of hearts. It is on this principle, that benevolent deeds to the poor are elsewhere represented as peculiarly acceptable to God. See Dan. 4: 27. Luke 3: 11. 11: 41. 18: 22.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1. *When Jesus had finished all these sayings.* It would seem by a remark in Luke 21: 37, 38, that, for a short time after the discourse recorded in the two preceding chapters, Jesus occupied himself by day in teaching in the temple, and spent his nights at the mount of Olives, that is, probably, in Bethany, which lay at the foot of the mount.

2. *The feast of the passover.* The word *feast*, in modern use, does not answer to the idea of the passover. It was not an entertainment, lasting for an hour or a day; but was a religious celebration of a most joyful character, extending through a whole week, in commemoration of the Hebrews' departure from the land of Egypt, and the preservation of their first-born on the night when the first-born of Egypt were slain. The name in English, as in Hebrew, expresses the design of the celebration. The Lord *passed over* the houses of the Hebrews, while he permitted death to enter the houses of the Egyptians. See Ex. 12th chapter. The word *festival* would be more appropriate. It was celebrated about the time of our April. It is also called *the feast* [festival] *of unleavened bread* (see Mark 14: 1. Luke 22: 1), because

3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill *him*.

5 But they said, Not on the feast-*day*, lest there be an uproar among the people.

6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

7 There came unto him a woman, having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured *it* on his head, as he sat *at meat*.

during the whole of the festival, the people ate unleavened bread. During this annual festival, which was celebrated at Jerusalem, immense multitudes of Jews thronged the city. ‖ *Is betrayed;* will be betrayed. The present tense is often used for the future; besides, on this occasion, the event was just at hand.

3. *The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people;* that is, the Sanhedrim, the members of which were selected from those classes of the people. See on 5 : 22. ‖ *Palace of the high priest;* mansion, place of residence; more strictly, that part of the building where large companies were received, which might be called the large hall. ‖ *Caiaphas.* Compare John 11: 49.

4. *By subtilty;* by craft, in some deceitful way. The principal men of the nation had often attempted in vain to ensnare him. See 22: 15, &c. Luke 11: 53, 54. Now they were consulting not how they might ensnare him in his conversation, but how they might in a crafty manner seize him, and in some way secure his death.

5. *Feast-day;* during the festival. The word *day* is not found in the original. Such multitudes of Jews were assembled at the passover, and the common people were so much in favor of Jesus (Matt. 21 : 46), that the members of the Sanhedrim feared that the people would be enraged, and would excite sedition, if Jesus should be taken by violence.

6. *In Bethany;* the village in the vicinity of the mount of Olives, to which Jesus was in the habit of retiring. ‖ *Simon the leper;* a friend, probably, of Jesus, who had been cured of leprosy. John informs us (12 : 2), that Martha was in attendance, and that Lazarus, who had been raised from the dead (John, 11th chapter), was one of the guests.

7. *A woman.* John says (12: 3), that this woman was Mary; she was the sister of Lazarus. See John 11 : 2. ‖ *Alabaster.* This was a species of marble, having the color of the human nail. It was used in making vases for ointments, and hence any valuable vase, of whatever materials, was called an *alabaster* vase. ‖ *Box;* what we should express by the word *vase.* These vases often had long, narrow necks, with a seal over the mouth, so as to prevent the perfume from evaporating. Hence, when, in Mark 14 : 3, the woman is said to have broken the vase, the meaning is, she broke the seal, so as to pour out the ointment. ‖ *Very precious;* costly. In the original of Mark 14 : 3, and of John 12 : 3, there is a word which shows that this ointment was of a genuine, unadulterated kind. This would appear also from the vase's being sealed. ‖ *Poured it on his head.* John (12 : 3) states, that *the feet* of Jesus were anointed. Doubtless both the feet and the head were anointed. John mentions particularly the feet, as the anointing of them was a signal mark of affection and humility. ‖ *As he sat at meat.* The posture at meals was not sitting, but reclining on one side, and such is the meaning of the word translated *sat*, in the original. Chairs and tables like ours were not then in use; couches adapted for reclining, were used at meals. These consisted of three parts, two placed lengthwise, and one across

8 But when his disciples saw *it*, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose *is* this waste?

9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

10 When Jesus understood *it*, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.

11 For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.

12 For, in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did *it* for my burial.

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at the head, leaving an open space at the foot for servants to bring in the food; in the space thus enclosed was what we should call the *table*. The guests reclined, at full length, on their left side, their heads being towards the table, and their feet extended. Thus, without disturbing the guests, the feet of a person might be anointed; so, too, could the head.

8. *His disciples.* Mark says (14:4), that *some* of the disciples were displeased; and John (12:4) says, more particularly, it was Judas Iscariot, who spoke unfavorably of the woman's attention. Judas was probably the only one that spoke; while none of the disciples vindicated Mary, and some, besides Judas, might have regarded the anointing as quite a needless act. Thus all the disciples might have silently acquiesced in the unkind remark of Judas. ‖ *They had indignation;* were greatly displeased.

9. *For much.* Mark (14:5) says, "more than three hundred pence," and John (12:5) mentions "three hundred pence" as the value. They doubtless meant the statement as a conjectural calculation, without intending to be accurate. The term translated *pence*, is, in the singular number, a denarius, equivalent, some say, to fourteen cents of our money; others say nine or ten cents; so that the ointment was estimated as worth about thirty or forty dollars of our money. ‖ *Given to the poor.* This remark, making a show of piety, was a mere pretence on the part of Judas, from whom it proceeded. See John 12:6.

10. *A good work;* an act testifying her gratitude, affection and reverence towards me.

12. *She did it for my burial.* This is the application which the Saviour kindly and solemnly made of Mary's action; as if he had said, This anointing may be regarded as an anticipation of my body's being prepared for burial, as I am soon to suffer death. It was customary among the Jews, in preparing a corpse for burial, to wrap up the body in linen with spices and ointments. See John 19:40. Since Jesus was soon to be put to death, he kindly put this construction upon the act, as if it might be so understood, and as an application which would most naturally occur to a person's mind after Jesus had been buried. Mary, however, knew not that her Lord was to be crucified in a few days. John (12:7) gives a slightly different verbal account: he says, "*against the day of my burying* hath she kept this;" that is, she has had this ointment some time, preserving it, in order to show respect to me, and has now used it in such a manner, that it may be regarded as one of the preparatives for my burial.

Observations. 1. Acts of kindness and respect to the Saviour, and to his people, will not pass without a recompense. Compare Matt. 10:42.

2. Expressions of affection and reverence, by methods which yet do not contribute to the relief of necessities, may be kindly regarded on the part of the Saviour. God has made many things, not so much for the relief of our pressing wants, as for our enjoyment and gratification.

3. The language of piety is sometimes a mere cloak to conceal the most foul purposes. vs. 8, 9, compared

13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, *there* shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,

15 And said *unto them*, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.

16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

17 Now the first *day* of the *feast of* unleavened bread, the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?

18 And he said, Go into the city, to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house, with my disciples.

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with John 12: 6. Alas! how differently from frail, erring men, does the Searcher of hearts frequently judge respecting professions and actions!

4. The piety which is disposed to be censorious, is either to be suspected as to its genuineness, or to be regarded as very deficient in maturity. Compare 1 Cor. 13.

14. *Then.* The remarks of the Saviour excited the indignation of Judas. Instead of being commended as a zealous disciple and friend of the poor, he was in reality reproved, and he probably suspected that his Master knew more about him than had been expressed. The remarks of Jesus sunk more deeply in the mind of Judas than in the minds of the other disciples, because he was conscious of being a guilty hypocrite. ‖ *Iscariot.* This was not properly a part of the name of Judas, but was a term expressing the place of his residence, at some time, and was added to his name in order to distinguish him from another of the same name. Compare Luke 6: 16. The word was probably made up of two Hebrew words, signifying *man of Kerioth.* A town of this name is mentioned in Josh. 15: 25.

15. *Covenanted;* agreed. ‖ *Thirty pieces of silver.* This was Jewish money; and the coin was equal to about fifty cents of our money. The whole sum amounted, then, to about fifteen dollars. A poor compensation for betraying the Lord of glory! How great is the power of avarice! and how true is the remark of the apostle in 1 Tim. 6: 10. For parallel passages, relating the events thus far recorded in this chapter, see Mark 14: 1—11. Luke 22: 1—6. John 12: 2—7.

17. *Unleavened bread;* another name for the passover. See on v. 2. ‖ *To eat the passover.* As the eating of the paschal lamb (Ex. 12: 3) was a very distinguished part of the festival, the expression *to eat the passover* came to be equivalent to our expression *keep the passover;* and it included the other sacrifices, parts of which were eaten. The word *passover* signified also the *victim*, as well as the *festival.*

18. *The city;* Jerusalem, where the festival was, by rule, observed. ‖ *To such a man;* a phrase employed when the speaker either did not know, or did not choose to mention, the name of the person. Mark (14: 13) and Luke (22: 10) mention such circumstances respecting the man, that the disciples would have no doubt whom to address. Jesus had perhaps made an agreement with a certain person to keep the passover at his house; and it was that person's servant whom the disciples would meet, and by following whom they would discover the proper house. Such multitudes flocked to

19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.

20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.

21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began, every one of them, to say unto him, Lord, is it I?

23 And he answered, and said, He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.

24 The Son of man goeth, as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! It had been good for that man if he had not been born.

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the city at this annual festival, that some precaution of this kind might have been necessary, in order to secure such accommodations as the Saviour on this last occasion wished for. ‖ *My time is at hand.* The meaning of this expression is doubtful, as it may refer either to the time of his death, or to the time agreed on by him to repair to the house for celebrating the passover. In the Saviour's mind, the expression doubtless included all that remained for him on earth; while the friend to whom the message was sent might have understood it in a limited extent.

19. *And the disciples did, &c.* By comparing Luke 22: 8, it will be seen that Peter and John were particularly selected to go into the city and make preparation.

20. *The even;* the evening. According to Lev. 23: 5, and Num. 9: 3, the evening was the time appointed for eating the paschal lamb. It was at this supper, that the instructions recorded in Luke 22: 14—18, 24—30, were given, and the touching act and impressive exhortation, recorded in John 13: 1—20, took place.

21. *Shall betray me;* will betray, is about to betray me.

23. *He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish.* In the time of our Saviour, the guests, reclining at table, ate from a common dish. Knives and forks, and spoons, were not used, as among us; but the food was conveyed from the dish to the mouth by the right hand. This remark of Jesus, then, did not specify any particular one of the company; but it was intended to impress the thought that one of his associates would betray him; one so bound to him by familiarity and profession of friendship, as to be eating with him at such a meal as the passover-supper. It has about the same meaning as the remark in Ps. 41: 9. Perhaps, however, as several dishes would be required for the whole company, Judas might have been eating out of the very dish from which his Master ate; so that the reply, though not marking out an individual, was somewhat particular. See John 13: 18. ‖ *Shall betray me.* Our modern distinction between the words *shall* and *will* did not exist, when our translation of the Bible was made. The Saviour merely foretold that such a one *would* betray him.

24. *Goeth;* goeth to death. ‖ *As it is written of him;* that is, by the ancient prophets. See, particularly, Is. 53. After Jesus had assured the disciples that one of their number was about to betray him, it is related by John (13: 23—29), that Simon Peter gave a hint to John that he should make a more particular inquiry. Having done so in a very private manner, while leaning upon the breast of Jesus, Jesus in a similar manner revealed to him in what way he might know the traitor. After the remark to John, and another remark to Judas, which the disciples did not understand, but which Judas doubtless understood in all its intent, Judas put the inqui-

25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered, and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.

26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake *it*, and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it.

28 For this is my blood, of the new testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.

29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you, in my Father's kingdom.

30 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

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ry which is mentioned in the next verse

25. *Thou hast said.* This was a method of expressing assent; it was equivalent to our word *yes.* At this point of time, it appears by John 13: 30, that Judas retired from the company. See also on Luke 22: 21—23.

26. At this affecting time, Jesus appointed a memorial of himself to be observed by his disciples. *Blessed it;* gave thanks, or blessed God. ‖ *This is my body;* this represents my body, is an emblem of my body. For such a use of the words *is* and *are*, see Gen. 41: 26, 27. Ezek. 37: 11. Matt. 13: 37, &c.

27. *The cup.* As wine was used at the passover-supper, a cup was at hand. ‖ *Ye all;* all ye, my disciples.

28. *This is my blood;* this represents my blood. ‖ *Of the new testament;* more properly, of the new covenant; meaning the new religious dispensation, in distinction from the old, the Mosaic dispensation. The *blood of the new dispensation*, means, *the blood by which that dispensation is established.* By the shedding of the Saviour's blood, the scheme of redemption, developed in the New Testament, was established. ‖ *Shed for many;* immense multitudes. A literal translation of this verse is singularly expressive; "This is my blood, the blood of the new covenant, the blood poured forth for many with respect to the forgiveness of sins." That Jesus appointed the partaking of bread and of wine for a perpetual observance, appears from 1 Cor. 11: 24—26.

29. *I will not drink*, &c. The idea is, No more shall I feast with you, till I enjoy another and a far better feast with you in heaven. The Saviour meant to show, that this was the last time he should sup with them on earth, on an occasion like the present; but that he was expecting a joyous meeting with them in heaven. This latter idea he expressed in language drawn from the fact that he had just been taking the paschal supper with them, and, as was usual, had employed wine in the celebration. Of course, he did not mean to convey the notion that there would be wine in heaven, or any ordinance that pertains to the present life. ‖ *This fruit of the vine;* that is, wine. ‖ *New.* This word, besides signifying *not old*, also signifies *different*, or *in a different manner*, and conveys the additional notion of *superior excellence.* During this part of his interview with the disciples, it is probable that Jesus spoke those cheering sentiments which are recorded by John, in chapters 14—16, which were followed by the affectionate prayer in the 17th chapter of John. The appropriateness of the consolations and of the prayer, every one must perceive, who has carefully followed the train of events.

30. *And when they had sung a hymn.* It was customary among the Jews to close, as well as to commence, the paschal supper, with singing. They employed Psalms 113,

31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you, into Galilee.

33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all *men* shall be offended because of thee, *yet* will I never be offended.

34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.

36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Geth-

114 at the commencement; and 115—118 at the closing part of the supper. The exercises in the house at Jerusalem, Jesus concluded in the same manner, but whether he employed the same psalms which were usually sung by the Jews at the close of the paschal supper, we have no means of determining.

31. *Shall be offended because of me;* will be led to commit offence; will be induced to do wrong against me, by deserting me. ‖ *For it is written;* Zech. 13: 7. The remark occurring in Zechariah would be applicable to the condition and conduct of the disciples; their leader was to be taken and condemned to death, and they would feel themselves without a guide and protector, and would stray from the right path.

32. *I will go before you into Galilee.* Jesus wished the disciples to understand that though he should be violently separated from them and put to death, he should yet rise again from the dead, and would again appear as their Master and Leader; and that they should meet with him in Galilee. Hence, after he had risen from the dead, it was to Galilee the disciples were directed to go, that they might enjoy the presence of their Master, and receive his last instructions.

33. *Though all men.* The word *men* is supplied by the translators. Peter doubtless meant, *all his companions;* though all these should forsake thee, &c. ‖ *Be offended.* See v. 31.

34. *Before the cock crow.* Mark says (14: 30), more particularly, *before the cock crow twice*, that is, the second time. The cock crows at midnight and at break of day. The night watch, called *cock-crowing*, commenced at the first of these times; but when the cock-crowing was mentioned, as a mark of time, without meaning particularly to designate the division into watches, it was the second time of crowing that was understood. The language of Matthew, then, presents no disagreement with that of Mark; and the meaning of the Saviour was, that between midnight and break of day, or before the morning, Peter would deny him three times.

While Jesus thus plainly foretold the sinful conduct of Peter, it is manifest from the whole account, that no necessity was imposed on Peter to be guilty of the crime. Nor did the foretelling of it, in the least degree, excuse Peter. On the contrary, he ought to have regarded it as a solemn warning, which should have led him to an increased watchfulness. The remark recorded by Luke (22: 31) was admirably fitted to put Peter on his guard.

For parallel passages, in respect to this prediction, see Mark 14: 27—31. Luke 22: 31—34. John 13: 36—38.

36. *Then cometh, &c.* Judas had already retired from the little company, and Jesus had been strengthening and consoling his disciples with instructions suited to their case. He had foretold the fall of Peter; and had just received from him the strongest

semane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.

37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.

38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

39 And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou *wilt*.

40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What! could ye not watch with me one hour?

41 Watch, and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.

42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.

43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.

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assurance of attachment, in which also the other disciples united. He then retired with his disciples to *Gethsemane*. This was a place, or a farm, just east of Jerusalem, and at the foot of the mount of Olives. Its name, traced to its origin, is equivalent to the word *oil-press*. In connection with this was a garden (see John 18: 1), to which Jesus went with the disciples. Between Jerusalem and Gethsemane was the brook Cedron.

37. *The two sons of Zebedee;* James and John. See Matt. 10: 2. Mark (14: 33) names them expressly. On other occasions, Jesus had selected the three disciples mentioned in this verse to accompany him. See Matt. 17: 1. Mark 5: 37.

38. *Even unto death;* an extensive expression, showing the depth of the Saviour's anguish. We sometimes, in like manner, speak of *mortal anguish*, that is, anguish which it seems scarcely possible to endure without sinking or dying under it.

39. *And he went a little further;* away from the three disciples. Luke says (22: 41) "about a stone's cast." ‖ *Fell on his face;* an action expressing great agitation of mind. Compare Num. 16: 22. ‖ *This cup.* The term *cup* is employed in the Bible to express one's *lot*, or *what any one is appointed to meet with*. Compare Matt. 20: 22. John 18: 11. Here it refers to the calamities which were so soon to be endured by the Saviour. Mark (14: 35) expresses the same idea by the word "*hour;*" that is, season of distress.

40. *The disciples;* the three whom he had taken from the others, and directed to keep awake.

41. *That ye enter not into temptation.* A most trying hour was indeed at hand, in which they would need special divine assistance. ‖ *The spirit — the flesh;* your souls are, indeed, kindly disposed towards me; but your animal nature is feeble, is exhausted, shrinks from trouble, and seeks repose. Hence the need of special prayer, at this trying time. The benevolent Saviour found also, in this remark, some apology for his well-disposed yet feeble disciples.

43. *Their eyes were heavy.* For hours in succession they had been occupied in a manner which might well be regarded as taxing all their powers of body and of mind, and which would make them peculiarly exposed to the influence of sleep. Nor did they know the weight of calamity

44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.

47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.

48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.

49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master! and kissed him.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they and

which was soon to come on them. It would seem, from Mark 14: 40, that the Saviour again awoke them, and that they felt conscious of deserving a reproof.

44. *Prayed the third time.* At this time, probably, occurred what Luke mentions, 22: 43; "There appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him;" confirming, probably, his resolution, and bringing afresh to his mind those thoughts which would enable him to endure with patience what yet remained for him to suffer.

The agony which the Saviour had endured, and which appears to have been relieved by the visit of the angel, was occasioned by his anticipation of the sufferings which were crowding on him. The prospect of his sufferings in mind and body, when wounded for our transgressions, and bearing the iniquity of us all, and being an offering for sin (see Is. 53: 5, 6, 10), was indeed heart-rending, and called into exercise all the Saviour's patience, confidence in his heavenly Father, and submission to the divine will. How appropriate are the remarks in Heb. 2: 10, 18. 4: 15.

45. *Sleep on now, &c.* This might be translated from the original in the form of a question, thus; Are ye sleeping on still, and taking rest? ‖ *The hour;* the time of my calamity, the time which demands your utmost vigilance.

The parallel passages relating to the Saviour's agony in Gethsemane, are Mark 14: 32—43. Luke 22: 39—46. Luke relates that "his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood;" not that blood actually flowed from the pores of his body; but his perspiration was most profuse; it was more like bleeding, such was its quantity, than like ordinary sweat. Hence Luke says, "*as it were.*" In a somewhat similar manner, when describing excessive grief, we sometimes speak of "tears of blood."

47. *Judas came.* In John 18: 2, we learn how Judas knew where he might find the Saviour. ‖ *A great multitude.* John (18: 3) is more particular. He says, "a band and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees;" that is, the Jewish guards of the temple, and such inferior officers as the chief priests might easily summon. ‖ *Staves;* properly clubs. John (18: 3) mentions also "lanterns and torches."

49. *Hail;* the common term of salutation, equivalent to *Health to you*, or *The Lord bless you.* Just before this, probably, occurred what is related in John 18: 4—9.

50. *Friend.* The word in the original does not contain in it any recognition of attachment, but simply of

laid hands on Jesus, and took him.

51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out *his* hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest, and smote off his ear.

52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

54 But how then shall the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves, for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.

56 But all this was done, that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.

57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus led *him* away to Caiaphas the high priest, where

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having been before acquainted with the person. It is a word which could be used without exposing the speaker in the least degree to the charge of insincerity, while yet it was altogether respectful.

51. *A servant of the high priest.* John (18: 10) mentions the name of the servant, as well as the name of the disciple, who committed the rash act. Luke (22: 51) mentions, also, that Jesus immediately cured the man who was thus wounded. O, how meek, how benevolent was the Saviour! Compare 5: 38, 39, 44.

52. *With the sword;* by the sword. Such a method of defence was wholly unsuitable to the professions and the precepts of the Messiah. Besides, should his disciples use the sword, they would provoke similar acts of violence in return, which would be but too successful against them. Their safety would consist not in violent defence, but in quiet submission. The language might also have been a proverb, grounded on the fact, that the sword is an instrument of death, and that those who on any occasion are forward to use it, are greatly in danger of suffering by it.

53. *Twelve legions.* A legion was, among the Romans, a body of soldiers differing in number at different periods of their history, from the sum 3900 to 6200. The word is used here to express an indefinitely large number; for the same purpose the word *twelve* is prefixed. By the use of the word *twelve*, the idea might have been conveyed, that if it were suitable, himself and his faithful disciples might each one be guarded by a legion of angels. The Saviour meant to make the impression that there was no need of his being defended by any violent methods; because, if he saw fit, he could procure most abundant aid from his heavenly Father.

54. *The Scriptures;* Is. 53. It was in accordance with the Scriptures, that he should be taken by violent hands and be put to death. Hence it would be unsuitable for him to seek any special means of rescue from the multitude; as the time had now come for him to be delivered up.

56. *Then all the disciples forsook him.* Compare v. 31. The parallel passages, relating to the betraying and apprehending of Jesus, are Mark 14: 43—52. Luke 22: 47—53. John 18: 2—12.

57. *Led him away to Caiaphas.* John relates (18: 13, 24), that they

the scribes and the elders were assembled.

58 But Peter followed him afar off, unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.

59 Now the chief priests and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;

60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, *yet* found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,

61 And said, This *fellow* said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.

62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? What *is it which* these witness against thee?

63 But Jesus held his peace. And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.

64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting

first led him away to Annas, who was father-in-law to Caiaphas; and that Annas sent him, still in the hands of the multitude that had taken him, to Caiaphas the high priest. It might have been with some view to please Annas, who had been high priest, and to give time for the assembling of the Sanhedrim, that Jesus was first carried to Annas. Caiaphas had already, in the presence of the Sanhedrim, given his advice, that Jesus should be put to death. See John 11: 49, 50.

58. *Afar off.* Perhaps it was not in his power to be nearer. Probably, too, love to his Master had become united with fear for his own safety. || *The high priest's palace.* The word rendered *palace* properly means that part of the building which was employed for the assembling of large companies. || *The servants;* the inferior officers, the attendants of the Sanhedrim. || *To see the end;* to see what the event, or issue, would be.

61. *I am able, &c.* The ground of this accusation doubtless was, the remark of Jesus, preserved by John (2: 19). But his remark was perverted; and, according to Mark (14: 59), the testimonies in respect to it did not agree together.

63. *Jesus held his peace.* He knew it would be of no service to vindicate himself, especially before Caiaphas: both Caiaphas and others were resolved to put him to death. Yet they wished to have the form of a trial. They knew he was innocent, and that no just ground of condemnation could be found; and their accusations and their questions were intended to lead him to some expressions that might prove a handle to them. See John 18: 19. To many of their questions, then, put in this captious, iniquitous manner, it was the proper course to give no reply; while, at the same time, Jesus manifested no indignation, and no want of respect to the rulers of the people. || *Answered.* This word is often used in the Bible as equivalent to our word *spoke.* || *I adjure thee;* I put thee on oath. Jesus was thus required, by the highest officer in the Jewish nation, and in presence of their highest court, to swear, that is, to declare on oath by the name of God. || *The Christ;* the Messiah. || *The Son of God.* This was a term equivalent to *Messiah.* It is used here, so as to render the reply which Jesus might make, entirely free from misapprehension; art thou in deed and in truth the very Messiah?

64. *Thou hast said.* See on v. 25. Jesus gave an affirmative reply. See Mark 14:62. To so direct a question, proposed to him in so solemn circumstances, it was suitable he should answer. || *Nevertheless.* The idea in-

on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? Behold, now, ye have heard his blasphemy.

66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.

67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote *him* with the palms of their hands,

68 Saying, Prophesy unto us, thou Christ, who is he that smote thee?

69 Now Peter sat without in

tended to be conveyed by our translators probably was, Although I am now your prisoner in such humbled circumstances, yet hereafter, &c. The original word is regarded by some as equivalent to our phrase *Not only so, but still further*. ‖ *The Son of man;* an expression which the Saviour frequently used respecting himself as the Messiah; it was another way of saying, *Ye shall see me*. ‖ *Right hand of power*. Luke says (22: 69), *right hand of the power of God*, meaning the right hand of God, or, as we say, of the Almighty. *Sitting on his right hand*, means, clothed with divine authority and possessing special divine favor. ‖ *Coming in the clouds of heaven;* coming from on high. The meaning is, You shall ere long have ample demonstration, that I am the Messiah, invested with divine power. The language was applicable both to the destruction which he would ere long inflict on Jerusalem and the Jewish nation, and to his coming for the final judgment. See 24: 29, 30, and 25: 31. Rev. 1: 7.

65. *Rent his clothes;* as a sign of pious horror, at what he would represent as the audacity of such a man as Jesus pretending to be the Messiah, and presuming to speak of himself as he had just spoken. Rending one's garments was a sign of grief and horror. See Josh. 7: 6. Judges 11: 35. 2 Sam. 1: 11. ‖ *Blasphemy;* impious arrogance; language which might be regarded as detracting from the honor of God. By this significant, yet hypocritical act, and by making a public charge against Jesus of blasphemy, the high priest wrought up the Sanhedrim to the desired point of pronouncing sentence; for the crime of blasphemy was, by the Jewish law, punishable with death. See Lev. 24: 11, 15, 16.

66. *Guilty of death*. This expression, in modern use, would signify, *found guilty of having put a person to death*. Here, however, it means, *worthy of death, justly liable to death*.

67. *Buffeted him;* smote with their fists.

68. *Prophesy unto us;* speak as a prophet, tell without seeing. Mark observes (14: 65), and Luke (22: 64), that some persons present had covered his face. ‖ *Thou Christ;* O Messiah; spoken, of course, in derision of his claim to be the Messiah. For parallel passages, respecting the Saviour's condemnation and ill treatment, see Mark 14: 53—65. Luke 22: 63—71. John 18: 19—23. The members of the Sanhedrim, after having pronounced Jesus worthy of death, probably agreed upon a recess until early the ensuing morning, leaving Jesus with the inferior officers and the multitude in the hall, or court, where they had at first assembled. This seems to be implied in 27: 1. It was during the absence of the members of the Sanhedrim, that the buffeting and other abuse of the Saviour occurred. The attending officers of the Sanhedrim (Mark 14. 65, *the servants;* not, however, the domestic servants of the high priest, but the attendants on the Sanhedrim. See also Luke 22: 63) were foremost in this abuse.

69. *Without in the palace*. For the meaning of the word *palace*, see

the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.

70 But he denied before *them* all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.

71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another *maid* saw him, and said unto them that were there, This *fellow* was also with Jesus of Nazareth.

72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.

73 And after a while, came unto *him* they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely, thou also art *one* of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.

74 Then began he to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.

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on v. 58. The apartment here intended, was at one end open to the air. Peter still remained in that part of the house. Thus he was *without*, that is, outside, or *beneath*, as it is expressed by Mark (14 : 66), in respect to the interior rooms of the building to which the Sanhedrim, or the high priest, had retired. ‖ *A damsel;* the female who acted as porter of the house. See John 18 : 16, 17. ‖ *Jesus of Galilee.* Galilee was mentioned by way of reproach. Compare John 1 : 46. 7 : 41, 52.

70. *I know not, &c.*; a method of denying; as much as to say, I am conscious of not being what thou hast said. Perhaps his fellow-disciple, John, heard this denial, as he was somewhere in this court. See John 18 : 15. Mark observes (14 : 68), that now the cock crew; that is, the first time.

71. *The porch.* This was immediately before the court, where Peter had hitherto been. ‖ *Another maid saw him.* Luke (22 : 58) appears to represent this second individual as *a man;* and in the original, the word *another*, in the same verse, is in the masculine gender. No difficulty, however, arises from this circumstance. For Luke doubtless meant merely to say that *another person* spoke to Peter; and to express this, without particularly noticing the sex, the Greek language would most naturally present the very word which Luke has employed. The word, too, translated *man*, in the same verse of Luke, properly signifies *a human being*, and is of the common gender, corresponding sufficiently well to our word *person*. John (18 : 25) employs still more general language in relating this second inquiry; "*they* said;" not meaning to be very particular. This second denial occurred shortly after the first. See Luke 22 : 58.

73. *After a while.* Luke (22 : 59) mentions that it was about an hour after. ‖ *They that stood by.* Matthew here expresses himself generally, while Luke (22 : 59) observes more particularly that "*another*" affirmed. ‖ *Thy speech bewrayeth thee. Bewray* is now an obsolete word, equivalent to our modern word *betray* or *make known*. How Peter's *speech*, that is, *manner of speaking*, proved him to have been a companion of Jesus, is explained by Luke 22 : 59, and Mark 14 : 70 — "Thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth thereto." The dialect of Galilee differed from that of Judea and Jerusalem, in being less polished, and using some words improperly. Since Peter was, without doubt, a Galilean, he might well, in present circumstances, be regarded as a follower of *the Galilean*. The person who accused him the third time was a relative of him that had lost his ear, and he had seen Peter in the garden when Jesus was apprehended. See John 18 : 26.

74. *To curse;* to imprecate curses on himself, if he really did know Jesus. ‖ *To swear;* to use the language of an oath. ‖ *The cock crew;* that is,

75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.

CHAPTER XXVII.

WHEN the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death.

2 And when they had bound him, they led *him* away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.

3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,

4 Saying, I have sinned, in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said,

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the second time. Compare Mark 14: 72, 30.

75. *And Peter remembered*, &c. Luke remarks (22: 61), that Jesus, turning, looked upon Peter. Peter was at some distance, towards the entrance, probably, of the hall (v. 71), but sufficiently near to receive the heart-affecting look of his abused Master. For parallel passages, relative to Peter's denial, see Mark 14: 66—72. Luke 22: 55—62. John 18: 15—27.

Let us here carefully OBSERVE,

1. The weakness of human resolution, and the folly of self-confidence. v. 35.
2. The necessity of watchfulness and prayer.
3. The little confidence that can be placed in the assertions of a man who abounds with oaths in his conversation. v. 74.
4. The kindness of Jesus to his tempted and vanquished disciple. Luke 22: 61.
5. The subduing influence of kindness. v. 75.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1. *When the morning was come.* The preceding examination and condemnation of Jesus (26: 59—66) appear to have occurred in the night, as soon as possible after he was apprehended. Early in the morning, after a recess, as it would seem, the members of the Sanhedrim came together again, to consult respecting his being put to death. Luke (22: 66) seems to group together all the transactions connected with the examination, condemnation, and subsequent consultation, and thus, in a general and brief way, speaks only of this meeting in the morning.

2. *Delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.* Pontius Pilate was at this time the chief Roman officer in Judea. The Roman title of his office was *procurator*. As the Jews were now subject to the Roman empire, the power of their courts was limited. The Romans still permitted them to enjoy their peculiarities as to religion, and as to many civil arrangements; the Jewish tribunals still existed, and had the right of inflicting punishments short of death. The Sanhedrim still had the right of condemning to death for religious offences, but the power of executing the sentence had been taken away; and the punishment of death could not be inflicted without the sanction of the Roman governor, or procurator.

3. *He was condemned;* by the Jewish Sanhedrim. Judas also had no doubt that the high priest would carry his point with Pilate, and have a final condemnation of Jesus. || *Repented himself;* was filled with remorse and anguish.

4. *Innocent blood.* What an attestation this to the spotlessness of Jesus'

What *is that* to us? See thou *to that*.

5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.

6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.

7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.

8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.

9 (Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;

character! Had there been a single impropriety in all the most confidential intercourse of Jesus with his disciples, Judas would at this time have exposed it.

5. *Hanged himself.* In Acts 1:18, it is stated, that Judas fell headlong, and "burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." Probably after hanging himself over some precipice, the rope, or the limb of the tree, broke; and he was precipitated, and came to his miserable end. Sad fate of one who had been a professed disciple of Jesus, had been admitted to most familiar intercourse with the Saviour, and had enjoyed the confidence of his fellow-disciples! Besides this, he went "to his own place" (Acts 1: 25); the place for which his character fitted him. Good indeed had it been for him if he had never been born. Matt. 26: 24. What a difference between the anguish of Peter, after he caught the eye of his Master, and the anguish of Judas! What a difference in their conduct! One was dissolved in grief, and entered anew upon a most vigilant service of his Master: the other, unable to endure the goadings of an awakened conscience, went away, in a hopeless and unhumbled frame of mind, and killed himself. Compare 2 Cor. 7: 10.

6. *It is not lawful.* The law required (Deut. 23: 18) that no money, procured in a shameful or base manner, should be devoted to the service of God. However glad the chief priests were, to have obtained, in any way, possession of Jesus, yet they would readily grant, that Judas had obtained his money very dishonorably. Besides, it had purchased human blood, and a person would naturally shrink from using money so procured. The priests professed tenderness of conscience as to the use of this money; but alas! how sadly had they violated the claims of conscience in their persecuting of Jesus and procuring his condemnation! Men sometimes make conscience yield to convenience, or to their own purposes.

7. *The potter's field;* a particular field which had furnished clay for making earthen vessels. It is probable that the clay was exhausted, and hence the field could be purchased at a low rate. || *To bury strangers in;* that is, Jews who might come from abroad to Jerusalem for religious and other purposes, and die away from home.

9, 10. *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy.* Jeremy is the same as Jeremiah. But the language quoted in this verse and in the following, is not found in the book of Jeremiah. Language sufficiently similar to occur to the mind of Matthew in this connection, is found in Zechariah 11: 12, 13. There is here a difficulty. How can it be satisfactorily explained, that a passage, found in Zechariah, is said by Matthew to have been spoken by Jeremiah? On this point, it may be said, 1. One manuscript, at least, of the original Greek, and one translation, furnish the word *Zechariah*, in-

10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.)

11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.

12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.

13 Then saith Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?

14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.

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stead of *Jeremiah*. 2. Some manuscripts, the Syriac translation, which is probably the oldest one, and some Latin books, mention the name of no prophet, and say, merely, "*spoken by the prophet*." It is possible that the name *Jeremiah* was inserted by some subsequent copyist. 3. There may have been extant, in the time of Matthew, a work ascribed to the prophet Jeremiah, containing this passage, which work afterwards perished. Such a work, or an extract claiming to be from such a work, Jerome, of the fourth century, says he saw. These circumstances, viewed separately or conjointly, greatly diminish the difficulty, which yet cannot be wholly removed. There was so striking a similarity between the language quoted and the event just related, that the event might be represented as a fulfilment of it, or as being strikingly in accordance with it.

11. *Jesus stood before the governor*. The account which Matthew gives of the remaining circumstances of the Saviour's being delivered up to the will of the Jews, is very brief. But the other evangelists supply the necessary information. It seems from John 18: 28—31, that when the Jews had carried Jesus to Pilate, and made their representation to him, he declined acceding to their request respecting his death, and referred the matter back to themselves. Being thus in danger of failing in their object, they brought a new accusation against him; namely (see Luke 23: 2), of exciting sedition among the people, and opposing Cesar, that is, the Roman emperor, professing to be himself a king. On the strength of this accusation, Pilate withdrew with Jesus from the chief priests and others (for they were unwilling to go into Pilate's hall, lest they should be rendered unclean, and become unfit to attend the passover exercises), and went into the hall. Thus, as Matthew relates in this verse, Jesus was before the procurator. ‖ *Art thou the king of the Jews?* Jesus was *the king of the Jews* in the Jewish sense of that phrase, for it signified *the Messiah*. He therefore gave an affirmative answer to Pilate's question. But according to John 18: 34—38, Jesus made such explanations of the term *king*, when applied to himself, as assured Pilate, that the Roman government had nothing to fear from him. Hence, when Pilate came forth to the Jews, he declared Jesus to be free from any just cause of death.

12. *When he was accused*, &c. The declaration of Pilate made the Jews more urgent (see Luke 23: 5) in pressing their accusation of Jesus' spreading seditious sentiments throughout the land, from Galilee even to Jerusalem. But to this accusation, Jesus, knowing that Pilate put no confidence in it, made no reply.

14. *The governor marvelled greatly*. He wondered at the patience and equanimity of Jesus, while his adversaries were expressing so determined a hostility against him.

At this point in the history, Luke relates (23: 6—12), that Pilate, having heard mention made of Galilee, which belonged to the jurisdiction of Herod, and wishing probably to rid himself of the Jews' importunities, as well as to seem to pay regard to Herod, who was now at Jerusalem attending the passover, sent Jesus and his accusers to Herod. Herod, after a short inter-

15 Now at *that* feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.

16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.

17 Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ?

18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.

19 When he was set down on the judgment-seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.

20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude, that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.

21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.

22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? *They* all say unto him, Let him be crucified.

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view, in which he abused Jesus, sent him back to Pilate, dressed with a gorgeous robe, in mockery of his claims. Pilate, strengthened by the fact that Herod had not found Jesus guilty, sought to release him, by proposing to scourge him, and then to let him go. Luke 23 : 16. Pilate was willing that Jesus should be scourged, so as to appease the people, and perhaps in hope that this would satisfy them instead of his death.

15. *At that feast;* namely, the annual festival of the passover. ‖ *To release unto the people a prisoner.* On the strength of this custom, Pilate hoped to release Jesus.

16. *Notable prisoner;* notorious, infamous. For his character and crimes, see Mark 15 : 7. Luke 23 : 19.

17. *When they were gathered together.* They had gone to Herod, and had now returned to Pilate; and as Pilate had a proposal to make to them, he might have called them to a near position. See Luke 23 : 13. It was not only the chief priests and distinguished men that were assembled, but, as Luke (23 : 13) says, *the people* also.

18. *For envy they had delivered him.* They envied his superior knowledge and ability, and his popularity. Pilate had discernment enough to see this; and he could gather this from many facts which had before this doubtless come to his knowledge respecting Jesus. The fact, that it was envy on the part of the Jewish rulers that led to their ill-treatment of Jesus, made Pilate believe that his proposal to release Jesus would be welcomed by the common people present. See Mark 15 : 8—10.

19. *When he was set down on the judgment-seat;* more strictly, while he was still sitting on the judgment-seat. ‖ *This day.* The word *day* was probably used here not in distinction from *night*, but merely as declaring that the dream was had but a short time before, not yesterday, but to-day. We speak also of twenty-four hours composing a day.

20. *Persuaded the multitude.* An unstable crowd they might easily influence. Jesus they might contemptuously speak of as a Galilean, as one who had mocked their hopes, and who, instead of being the victorious king they had anticipated, was now a detected impostor and a forlorn captive.

21. *Twain;* an obsolete word, meaning *two.* ‖ *Whether of the twain,* which one of the two?

22. *Let him be crucified.* The San-

23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.

24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but *that* rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed *his* hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye *to it.*

25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood *be* on us, and on our children.

26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered *him* to be crucified.

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band *of soldiers.*

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hedrim had condemned Jesus for blasphemy; and the Jewish law (Lev. 24: 16) had directed that a blasphemer should be stoned. They had also brought, in the presence of Pilate, a new accusation against Jesus; that of arraying himself against the authority of Cesar. Luke 23: 2. In view of this, they could represent that a Roman mode of punishment was required Besides, they wished to heap all possible indignity upon Jesus; and crucifixion was a most cruel and ignominious punishment, inflicted by the Romans only on slaves and the vilest malefactors, as robbers, assassins and rebels.

23. *What evil hath he done?* Thus Pilate, by again declaring his conviction that Jesus had been guilty of no crime, made another ineffectual effort to obtain for him a release. Compare Luke 23: 22.

24. *He took water and washed his hands.* By this symbolical act, he wished to declare to the people his conviction of the innocence of Jesus, and his desire that, if Jesus were put to death, he might be known as having no participation in such an act. The Jews well understood the import of such an action. See Deut. 21: 6, 7.

25. *His blood be on us, &c.;* on us and on our posterity be the consequences of putting him to death; we will bear the blame. If the curse of God follows, let it fall on us. Fatal imprecation! fulfilled, alas! with horrors indescribable.

26. *When he had scourged Jesus.* Scourging always preceded the punishment of crucifixion. The person was almost entirely stripped of his clothes, and was beaten, commonly with whips. The whips were also armed with stings, making the suffering so severe that the victim would sometimes die under it. This, then, was not the scourging which Pilate had proposed to inflict, just to satisfy the people, so that he might release Jesus. See Luke 23: 16. It would seem, however, from the account given by John (19: 1—16), that after Pilate had thus permitted him to be scourged (which act was regarded as preliminary to crucifixion), Pilate still made an effort to release him, by again coming forward and protesting his belief in the innocence of Jesus, hoping, perhaps, that after all which had passed, the scourging that had just been inflicted might so far excite their compassion as to procure their assent to his release. But it was in vain. They were determined on his death; and they let Pilate know, that if he released Jesus, his own loyalty to Cesar would be suspected, and he would thereby endanger himself. See John 19: 12. Having so long endeavored to avoid compliance with the clamors of the priests and the people, he at last desisted from the fruitless effort, and delivered Jesus to their will.

27. *The soldiers of the governor;* the Roman soldiers. ‖ *The common hall.* This is the same as is called in John 18: 28, 33, "the judgment hall." The original word properly signifies the house, the palace, which was em-

28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.

29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put *it* upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!

30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.

31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify *him*.

32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they

ployed for the residence of the Roman governor, or procurator, when he should be in Jerusalem; for he generally resided in Cesarea. The tribunal, that is, the place for holding trials, was outside, in the open court or area, attached to the palace. Jesus, then, was taken into an inner apartment. This palace was situated in the vicinity of the temple. ‖ *The whole band of soldiers.* At the time of the passover, it was usual for one *cohort* of the Roman army to be stationed in Jerusalem. A cohort was divided into smaller portions, each containing sometimes a hundred and thirty men, and sometimes two hundred and ten. One of these smaller divisions is probably here meant.

28. *They stripped him;* that is, of his mantle. ‖ *A scarlet robe.* A garment of the kind here mentioned was sometimes worn by the Roman emperors, by military commanders, and by soldiers. Pilate's soldiers, in derision of the claim, which they knew Jesus had made, to be the king of the Jews, placed on him, instead of his own mantle, an old military robe. Matthew calls it a *scarlet* robe, or, as the original word may be translated, *crimson*, a red color less bright than scarlet; but Mark (15: 17) and John (19: 2) speak of it as a *purple* garment. There is, however, no difficulty connected with this variety of expression; for anciently the term *purple* was applied to any very red color, and in good writers, the original words, signifying *purple* and *scarlet*, or *crimson*, are interchanged, and used synonymously.

29. *A crown of thorns;* a crown made of a thorn bush. ‖ *They put it upon his head;* in derision of his claiming to be a king, as a crown is an appendage of royalty. There is no intimation, however, that they put this mock crown on his head in such a manner as to wound his flesh. ‖ *A reed;* answering to a royal sceptre. ‖ *Mocked him;* not in our sense of the word *mock*, that is, *to imitate another;* but *derided, insulted him.*

The indignities heaped upon Jesus, as related in vs. 28—30, were not required by any rule or custom respecting those who had been condemned to be crucified, but arose wholly from the domineering disposition of the Roman soldiers, and their desire to make sport. They probably had no particular spite against Jesus; they knew very little, perhaps nothing, of him, but what they had very recently heard from the Jews, his adversaries; and they cared very little about him. They probably thought him a weak-minded and unfortunate fanatic, over whom they might triumph, and with whom they might make sport without danger to themselves; just as many persons of uncultivated minds, and of rough sensibilities, can with pleasure join a crowd that may be abusing a fellow-creature.

32. *As they came out;* that is, from the city. It was customary for punishments of this nature to be inflicted outside of the city. Compare Num. 15: 35. 1 Kings 21: 13. ‖ *Cyrene.* This was a large city of Lybia, in the northern part of Africa. Here large numbers of Jews resided. The Jews of this city were in the habit of visiting Jerusalem at the great festivals;

compelled to bear his cross.
33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, A place of a skull,
34 They gave him vinegar to

so that there was even a synagogue in Jerusalem for their accommodation. See Acts 2: 10. 6: 9. || *Simon by name.* Mark (15: 21) mentions the additional circumstance, that he was father of Alexander and Rufus. These were men who, at the time of Mark's writing, were well known among the Christians. Whether they were the same as those mentioned in Acts 19: 33, Rom. 16: 13, cannot be decided. As Jesus and the attending company were going on to the place of execution, Simon was on his way from the country (Mark 15: 21) to the city, intending doubtless to enter by the same gate through which Jesus had passed. || *They compelled.* The original word here is the same as in 5: 41. The remarks there made may show, that the attending officers had a right to call into service any persons. || *To bear his cross.* It was customary for the condemned criminal, after having been scourged, to endure the additional suffering of being obliged to carry the cross himself to the place of punishment. In the present instance, doubtless, there was such an exhaustion of strength, that aid was necessary, lest Jesus should die on the way. Nor can this be wondered at. After the occupation of the preceding day, he had attended on the passover-supper, and had had a long conversation with his disciples. During the night, he not only had had no sleep, but had been enduring the most exhausting anguish before being apprehended; then he was hurried away to the house of Annas, thence to that of Caiaphas, where he endured insult and abuse, both as to body and to mind. Thence he was sent to Pilate, thence to Herod, and back again to Pilate. Shortly after, he was scourged, and then abused by the Roman soldiers; and after all this, the weight of the cross was laid on him. It doubtless appeared to the soldiers, and the accompanying Jews, a happy circumstance that some one was passing by, whose assistance they might command. It is not unlikely, too, that the Jews who were present might have known Simon, as one who had favored Jesus; and they therefore suggested to the Romans the compelling of his services. Luke (23: 27—32) informs us, that a multitude of the people and of women followed to the place of execution; and that two malefactors were also led forth to be crucified. The cross consisted of a piece of wood placed upright, with another piece placed across it at right angles near the top. It seldom exceeded ten feet in height; and the crucified person was usually about three feet from the ground. Near the middle of the upright piece, there was a projection on which the victim sat; the arms were extended, and fastened to the cross-piece by nails through the palms of the hand; through each foot also a nail, or spike, was driven. Sometimes the victim was fastened to the cross after it was erected; sometimes while it was lying on the ground.

33. *Golgotha;* an eminence at that time near the city, on the north-west, where malefactors were commonly executed. Luke (23: 33) says, the place was called *Calvary.* This latter name comes to us from the Latin language, in which the word *Calvaria* signifies *a skull;* and the original word used by Luke is the Greek word for *a skull.* *Golgotha* is properly a Hebrew word, having the same signification. The evangelists agree together, then, in the name; only some of them use a Hebrew word, and one of them a Greek word, which is a translation of the Hebrew; while our word *Calvary* is drawn from a Latin translation of the same name. || *A place of a skull.* The bones of criminals were frequently left exposed on this rising ground; hence it was called *the place of a skull,* or *of skulls.*

34. *Vinegar to drink, mingled with*

drink, mingled with gall: and when he had tasted *thereof*, he would not drink.

35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.

36 And sitting down, they watched him there;

37 And set up over his head his accusation, written, THIS IS JESUS, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him; one on the right hand, and another on the left.

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gall. Our word *vinegar* hardly corresponds to the term in the original. The drink which was now offered to the Saviour, was the one ordinarily given to criminals just before execution, so as to produce intoxication and insensibility to the pains which would otherwise be endured. It was made of a poor sort of wine, with which myrrh was mingled, and various bitter ingredients, such as wormwood, &c., coming under the general name *gall.* It was not offered to the Saviour now as an indignity, or to aggravate his distress, but to render him insensible to pain by drowning his senses. The same mixture is called by Mark, "wine mingled with myrrh." ‖ *He would not drink.* Jesus was unwilling to drown his sensibilities, but chose to meet death in all its bitterness, without any of its pains being diminished by such artificial methods. Having therefore just tasted of the mixture, and perceived what it was, he declined drinking it.

35. *Parted his garments;* divided them among themselves; for persons who were crucified were fastened to the cross perfectly naked. It was the custom of the Roman soldiers to claim the garments of persons whom they had executed. ‖ *Casting lots.* John (19: 23, 24) explains distinctly that some of his garments they divided among themselves; but for his tunic, that is, the inner garment, which they were unwilling to cut, they cast lots, to see to whom it should fall. The number of soldiers engaged in the crucifixion and in taking the garments was four. John 19: 23. ‖ *Spoken by the prophet.* Ps. 22: 18. The language of the psalm was literally applicable to the conduct of the soldiers. Though the soldiers had no intention of fulfilling any thing which had been written respecting Jesus, yet the manner in which they conducted towards him exactly accorded with what inspired men had written.

36. *Sitting down, they watched him there.* It was customary for a crucified person to remain on the cross till he died; but while he exhibited any signs of life, he was watched by a guard.

37. *Set up over his head his accusation.* It was customary to write in black letters, on a whitened tablet, the crime for which the person suffered. This tablet was fastened to the cross, probably just above the sufferer's head. The inscription on the cross of Jesus was prepared according to the direction of Pilate (John 19: 19), and was expressed in Hebrew (that is, the dialect of Hebrew which the Jews in Judea then spoke), in Greek, and in Latin, so that all who should go to the place might be able to read. This inscription was not satisfactory to the Jews. John 19: 20, 21.

38. *Two thieves;* more properly, *robbers.* The season of the passover, when many were assembled at Jerusalem, was regarded as suitable for the execution of criminals, that an impression might be made on as many as possible. Compare Deut. 17: 13. It was also customary among the Romans to crucify several criminals at the same time. These robbers might have been condemned some time be-

39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,

40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.

41 Likewise, also, the chief priests, mocking *him*, with the scribes and elders, said,

42 He saved others, himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.

43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.

44 The thieves, also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.

45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land, unto the ninth hour.

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fore, and their execution delayed till the return of the passover. Luke (23: 34) informs us, that when the act of crucifying was completed, Jesus meekly prayed for the forgiveness of those who were accessory to his death.

39. *Wagging;* shaking the head by way of derision.

40. *Thou that destroyest, &c.* Compare 26: 61. || *If thou be the Son of God.* Compare 26: 63.

41. *Mocking;* deriding, insulting.

42. *If he be the king of Israel.* Compare John 19: 14, 15.

43. *He trusted, &c.* These revilings of the chief priests, scribes, and elders, appear to have excited the Roman soldiers to similar abuse of Jesus. Luke (23: 36) relates that they, coming near, offered him *vinegar* (that is, the inferior sort of wine used by the Roman soldiers), and reproached him in much the same style as did the principal men among the Jews.

44. *Cast the same in his teeth.* This was a phrase more common formerly than at present, meaning that the robbers reviled Jesus, by using much the same language. Luke relates (23: 39—43) that one of the robbers relented, exhibited a penitent spirit, and received a gracious assurance from Jesus that he should speedily be in bliss. Matthew and Mark (15: 32), without intending to be precise, speak only in a general way of the robbers; while Luke descends to particulars.

At this point of time, probably, occurred the interesting facts related in John 19: 25—27.

45. *From the sixth hour there was darkness, &c.*; that is, from our twelve o'clock to our three o'clock. The darkness here mentioned could not have been an eclipse of the sun; because it was the time of full moon, when the passover occurred; and such is the position of the moon at that time, that an eclipse of the sun cannot take place. Besides, the duration of this darkness altogether opposes the thought of its having been what we call an *eclipse*. Undoubtedly it was a supernatural darkness, caused by the Author of nature, as being harmonious with the events then passing on Golgotha. || *Over all the land.* Luke says (23: 44) in our translation, "*over all the earth;*" but precisely the same word in the original is employed by him, as by the other evangelists. It would have been better to have translated the word in Luke in the same manner as it is in the other evangelists. The word is often used to express a comparatively small portion of the earth; and it is probable that only Palestine, the country of the Jews, and the neighboring regions, were here intended.

It may be well to mention here, that John (19: 14, 16) mentions that it was about the *sixth* hour, when Jesus was given up by Pilate to be crucified. It is probable, however, that some manuscripts of John's Gospel were, at an

46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard *that*, said, This *man* calleth for Elias.

48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled *it* with vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink.

49 The rest said, Let be; let us see whether Elias will come to save him.

50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.

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early date, incorrectly copied in this instance, and the letter of the alphabet which signifies *six*, was by mistake written instead of the letter signifying *three*. There are also some manuscripts, and other similar authority, which present the verse in John as agreeing with the statement in Mark 15: 25, that Jesus was crucified about the *third* hour.

46. *Eli, Eli, &c.* These words and the two following are expressed in the language spoken at that time by the Jews in Judea; and Matthew immediately gives the translation of them. Mark (15: 34) slightly varies the sound of the word which signifies *God*, but without at all affecting the meaning. Whichever of these two forms of expression the Saviour employed, the Jews who were present readily understood the language.

Jesus did not here utter the language of despair, but of extreme anguish. And O, how dreadful must have been the anguish of his soul, to have extorted such a cry! And what a lesson do we here learn respecting the evil and the desert of sin, in the anguish of the Saviour, when thus our iniquities were laid on him! How dreadful the woe of those who, in addition to all the sense of Jehovah's displeasure against them personally as sinners, must suffer the pangs of a guilty conscience for having slighted the provisions of saving love, and turned away from him that speaketh from heaven!

47. *This man calleth for Elias.* The Saviour's language was doubtless understood; but some Jews who were present took occasion from it still further to deride him. It was a common opinion among the Jews, that Elias, that is, Elijah, was personally to appear just before the Messiah, and to assist him in entering upon his office. There being some similarity in the words employed by Jesus to the word *Elias*, some, who were present, abused them, as if the Saviour were calling for the interposition of Elias to rescue him from his present unhappy state.

48. *With vinegar;* that is, the common drink of the Roman soldiers, an inferior sort of wine, but not mingled with myrrh and other intoxicating drugs. It appears from John (19: 28) that Jesus had said, "I thirst." The sponge filled with this drink was fastened round a reed; John (19: 29) says, "upon hyssop," that is, a stick or small branch of a hyssop-bush. For reaching the mouth of a crucified person, a stick two or three feet long would be quite sufficient.

49. *The rest said, &c.* They endeavored to induce the person to desist from offering drink to Jesus, on the plea that perhaps Elias would come to his succor; thus still further deriding him. It would seem from Mark 15: 36, that this person persevered in offering the drink, saying, *Let alone*; that is, *Permit me*. And his reason for giving the drink would seem to have been, to lengthen out the life of this professed Messiah till Elias should come; lest he would die before Elias should make his appearance. Thus no indignity, that the innocent, holy sufferer could endure, was spared.

50. *Cried again.* Compare v. 46.

51 And, behold, the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of saints, which slept, arose,

53 And came out of the graves, after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.

54 Now, when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly, this was the Son of God.

55 And many women were there, beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him;

56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children.

Luke (23: 46) and John (19: 30) inform us of the sentiments which the Saviour uttered. || *Yielded up the ghost;* gave up his spirit; that is, died.

51—53. *The vail of the temple.* The most retired and sacred part of the temple was called the *holy of holies*, and was separated by a veil from the other parts of the temple. It was this veil which was now torn in two pieces. Compare Heb. 9: 3. || *The graves;* several graves; not graves in general. || *And came out of the graves after his resurrection.* The arrangement of some of these words in our translation ought probably to be different. By placing a comma and the word *and* after the word *graves*, the sentence would stand thus: "And came out of the graves, and after his resurrection went into the holy city," that is, Jerusalem. Such a rendering is in accordance with the original. As the words stand in our version, the idea seems to be that "many bodies arose" at the time of the crucifixion, but did not leave the graves till after the resurrection of Jesus. Matthew here groups together several circumstances, some of which, however, did not occur till after the resurrection of Christ, as he himself states. These were, indeed, remarkable events, and fitted to make a deep impression on reflecting minds. They may be regarded as appropriate attestations to the truth of the claims of Jesus, and anticipations of what was afterwards to be wrought by his power.

54. *The centurion;* the Roman officer who superintended the crucifixion. || *Feared greatly;* they regarded the earthquake and the rending of the rocks as proofs of the divine indignation against what had been done, and against themselves as the agents of the Jews. || *Truly, this was the Son of God.* The centurion, doubtless, knew that Jesus had claimed to be the Son of God; that is, in the understanding of Jesus and of the Jews, to be the Messiah. The centurion, recalling this, expressed himself as here stated, but probably understood the language differently. He was a heathen, and was accustomed to think of many gods, and to regard some beings as sons of gods, as inferior deities, or as peculiarly allied to the gods. He may have meant to say, He was a son of a god; and his idea, perhaps, included no more than that he certainly was in high favor with some god; that is, that he must have been a truly good man. Accordingly, Luke mentions (23: 47), that the centurion said, Certainly, this was a righteous man.

55. *Ministering unto him;* waiting on him; supplying his wants.

56. *Mary Magdalene;* that is, Mary of the town of Magdala, a town not far from Capernaum; but the precise situation of which is uncertain. See Luke 8: 2. || *Mary, the mother of*

57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:

58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.

59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,

60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled

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James and Joses. This Mary was sister to our Lord's mother (John 19: 25), and wife of Cleophas. James is the one called *James the Less* (Mark 15: 40), to distinguish him from James the brother of John. This James and Joses are named in 13: 55, as relatives of our Lord. ‖ *The mother of Zebedee's children;* that is, Salome. See Mark 15: 40. Zebedee's children were James and John. See 10: 2. Luke, without particular mention of names, says (23: 49), that "all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off [afar, compared with the people just around the cross], beholding."

57. *When the even was come.* The Jews reckoned two evenings; one commencing some time before sunset, and the other at sunset. What is related in this verse and the following, commenced before the latest evening; so that nothing might remain to be done on the Sabbath. The Jewish Sabbath commenced on our Friday evening. ‖ *A rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph.* There were several towns, called *Arimathea*, in Palestine; one was in the tribe of Benjamin, about four miles distant from Jerusalem; but which of them is here spoken of, we have not the means of determining. Mark (15: 43) calls Joseph "an honorable counsellor," as being probably a distinguished member of the Sanhedrim. That he was a member, would appear from Luke 23: 51. All the evangelists agree to his being in heart a good man, a favorer of Jesus; but, according to John (19: 38), he was a disciple *secretly*. At the time of which the evangelist is now speaking, he seems to have acquired a commendable boldness, and to have plainly maintained his dissent from the doings of the Sanhedrim, disregarding the ill-will and the reproach which he would incur from the Jews. John also relates (19: 39), that Nicodemus (John 3: 1,2) came forward at this time to testify his respect for Jesus.

58. *Begged the body of Jesus*, &c. John relates (19: 31—37), that previously to this, the Jews had requested of Pilate, that the death of the three crucified persons might be hastened, as the Jews were unwilling that the bodies should remain on the crosses during the Sabbath, which would be the next day. It was, however, discovered that Jesus was already dead. This circumstance led Joseph to request the body of Jesus. According to Mark (15: 44), Pilate wondered at Jesus' having died so soon; for it was frequently the case, that crucified persons did not die till after the day on which they had been crucified; sometimes they remained alive several days. The exhausted condition of the Saviour's body and mind sufficiently accounts for his so soon expiring. Among the Romans, the corpses of crucified persons were not buried, except by express permission; they remained on the cross, and there wasted away. But an exception to this general practice was made in favor of the Jews, on account of the regulation in Deut. 21: 22, 23. When there was a prospect that death would not speedily take place, they used various methods to hasten it. In the present instance, the near approach of the passover Sabbath furnished an additional reason. Even the Romans were in the habit of delivering up to their friends the corpses of deceased criminals, when one of their festivals was about to be celebrated.

60. *In the rock;* in a rock. The

a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.

61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.

62 Now the next day that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,

63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days, I will rise again.

64 Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure, until the third day; lest his disciples come by night and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.

65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make *it* as sure as ye can.

66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

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country around Jerusalem was rocky. The tomb was in a garden, near the place where Jesus was crucified. See John 19: 41. It was common for tombs to be out of cities, and to be excavated from a solid rock; frequently having the appearance of a cave. || *His own new tomb.* Luke says (23: 53), and John (19: 41), that no one had been buried in it. How wisely did Providence order this circumstance, so that after the resurrection of Jesus, there was no possibility of mistake as to his person. || *He rolled a great stone to the door.* The entrance to sepulchres used to be closed either by stone doors or by a flat stone placed up against it. John informs us (19: 39), that Nicodemus brought a quantity of myrrh and aloes, and that the body of Jesus was prepared for burial in the same becoming manner as was usually practised among the Jews in respect to their deceased friends. The kind interposition of Joseph and of Nicodemus doubtless prevented the body of Jesus from being deposited with those of the robbers in some public burying place, devoted to the burying of criminals.

61. *The other Mary;* the one mentioned in v. 56; the mother of Joses. See Mark 15: 47. || *Sitting over against the sepulchre;* noticing where he was laid, and waiting affectionately to see, as it were, the last of their beloved Lord. See Luke 23: 55. They then returned to their lodgings, and prepared spices and ointment for anointing the body, and, having made what preparation they could, rested on the Sabbath. Compare Luke 23: 56.

62. *The day of the preparation.* The day preceding the Sabbath, or any festival, was called *the preparation.* || *The next day;* the Jewish Sabbath, our Saturday. || *The chief priests and Pharisees;* doubtless a few of them, as they went on a business which they would not wish to be made public.

63. *After three days, I will rise again.* Matt. 12: 38—40. 16: 21. Mark 8: 31. Though Jesus spoke some things on this subject to his disciples alone, yet the knowledge of them might be imparted to others. John 10: 15, 17, 18.

64. *That the sepulchre be made sure;* by stationing guards there.

65. *Ye have a watch;* the soldiers who had already been engaged at the crucifixion. It was customary among the Romans, when appointing a guard over a prisoner, to employ four soldiers for each watch of three hours, so that the four would be successively relieved by another set of four. They usually employed four of these sets.

66. *Sealing the stone.* Probably a rope was passed over it in such a way, that the two ends meeting upon it were fastened, and some public seal was attached to them. No one, then, could pass into the sepulchre without resisting the public authority.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first *day* of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre.

2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.

3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:

4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead *men*.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1. *The Sabbath;* the Jewish Sabbath, our Saturday. || *As it began to dawn.* The other evangelists speak of its being very early, while it was not yet fully light. Mark 16: 2. Luke 24: 1. John 20: 1. || *Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary;* the same Mary as is mentioned in 27: 61. By comparing the other evangelists, we shall see that other women accompanied these. See Mark 16: 1, where Salome, mother of James and John, is mentioned; and Luke 24: 10, where Joanna (Luke 8: 3) is also mentioned, with the general remark, that *certain others* were with them. Matthew mentions by name merely the principal ones. || *To see the sepulchre.* Luke (24: 1) mentions that they brought the spices which they had prepared. Their object was, not *merely* to see the sepulchre, but also to make use of the aromatic substances which they had prepared. See Luke 23: 56. Though they doubtless knew that spices and ointment had already been used (compare John 19: 40), yet their affection for the Saviour led them to prepare an additional quantity. It was the only way in which they could show their regard; and they doubtless believed there might be occasion for more of such preparations than had been used. For, as it was towards evening when Jesus was placed in the tomb, Joseph, and those who were with him, might not have had time to complete the anointing of Jesus. Mark (16: 1) relates that the women bought the spices *after the Sabbath had passed;* that is, probably after sunset on Saturday. This may appear not exactly to agree with Luke (23· 56), who says, that the woman, having returned from the cross, prepared spices, and rested on the Sabbath. But Luke may be understood as merely stating two things; that the women, after arriving at their lodgings, prepared spices, and kept the Sabbath, without mentioning these in the very order in which they occurred. He might well mention the preparing of spices *first*, as the facts respecting Jesus were doubtless uppermost in his mind. Perhaps, too, the women may have *prepared* (Luke 23: 56) what spices they had as soon as they arrived at home on Friday evening, just before sunset; and may have *bought* (Mark 16: 1) an additional quantity on Saturday, after sunset.

2. *There was a great earthquake.* The connection shows that the verb in the original ought to be rendered *had been.* || *The angel;* more properly, *an* angel. || *Rolled back the stone.* Compare 27: 60. Mark relates (16: 3, 4), that the women, on their way, had been speaking together about the difficulty of removing the stone, not knowing the arrangement which the chief priests had made for the sepulchre's being kept closed. Perhaps they thought some one could be procured in the neighborhood of the spot to remove it for them; or their remark might have been simply an allusion to the weight of the stone, and the difficulty which they might find in removing it; a difficulty which had not before occurred to them, so occupied were they with the one object of paying respect to their deceased, beloved Lord.

5 And the angel answered, and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.

6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay:

7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead, and behold, he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.

8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.

9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail! And they came, and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.

10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go, tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.

11 Now, when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and showed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.

12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had

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5. *And the angel answered.* Mark (16 : 5) says that the women, entering into the sepulchre, saw a young man there, who spoke to them. The angel appeared in the form of a young man. This was subsequent to his removing the stone and sitting on it. Luke states (24 : 4), that there were two men. Only one of them, however, probably spoke to the women, and hence only one is mentioned by Matthew and Mark. It may here be remarked, that tombs, or sepulchres, among the people of the East, were far more spacious than tombs are among us. Those which were owned by the rich and powerful, were large subterranean excavations, consisting frequently of two, three, and even seven apartments, containing suitable places for the depositing of dead bodies. The entrance into them was by a descent over a number of steps.

6. *As he said.* See 17 : 22, 23. Compare Luke 24 : 7. Matt. 26 : 32.

7. *Into Galilee.* Compare 26 : 32.

8. *And they departed quickly.* It is probable, from the account given by John (20 : 1, 2), that Mary Magdalene had hastened away from the place as soon as it was discovered that the body of Jesus was not there, and before the other women went away. The other women then departed, to inform the disciples of what they had seen and heard.

9. *And as they went;* that is, the other women, Mary Magdalene not being with them; for Mark says (16 : 9), Jesus appeared *first* to Mary Magdalene. It is probable, from the statement of John, in his twentieth chapter, that Mary Magdalene, having left the ground before the other women, met with Peter and John, who, after hearing from her, came off without delay to the tomb, and found it empty, and then returned from the tomb. Mary Magdalene arrived later than they, and then Jesus appeared to her. Shortly after this, Jesus appeared to the other women, who were going, by direction of the angel, to inform the disciples. || *All hail;* the usual form of salutation on meeting with friends. || *Worshipped him;* bowed down, made obeisance to him.

10. *Be not afraid.* Terror would naturally mingle with their joy on so extraordinary an occasion. || *Tell my brethren.* How affectionate and condescending was his language! Compare John 20 : 17. This message was a repetition of what the angel had communicated, and of the direction which Jesus himself had before given. See 26 : 32.

12. *Large money;* a large sum of

taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,

13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him *away*, while we slept.

14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.

15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.

17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came, and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;

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money. ‖ *While we slept.* A more unsuitable story could scarcely have been devised. For how could the soldiers know what had happened while they were asleep? How improbable that four (27: 65) Roman soldiers should fall asleep while on guard, in face of the severe punishment which the Roman military law threatened! Such carelessness, they knew, must have occasioned their death. How improbable that the disciples, who had manifested such fear when their Master was apprehended, and who had for the most part deserted him, should venture on such an attempt! But the chief priests must make up some story; and they calculated largely on the credulity of the people.

14. *We will persuade him.* As they had carried their point with Pilate in respect to the crucifixion of Jesus, they had no doubt they could easily satisfy him in regard to the soldiers. They knew the power of a bribe. Besides, Pilate would, in a few days, as soon as the passover celebration was concluded, remove to Cesarea, and would care but little about the stories that might be circulating among the Jews in Jerusalem.

15. *Until this day;* the time at which Matthew wrote this account, which was at least eight or ten years after the event.

16. *Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee.* Previously, however, to this, Jesus had appeared to his disciples. Mark (16: 12) and Luke (24: 13—35) relate his appearing to two of them; Mark (16: 14), Luke (24: 33—49), John (20: 19—23), relate his appearing to the disciples in the absence of Thomas; and John (20: 24—29) relates the instance of his appearing to them when Thomas was present. ‖ *Into a mountain, where Jesus had appointed them;* had directed them. John (21: 1—24) mentions a preceding meeting of Jesus with the apostles in Galilee, at the sea of Tiberias. ‖ *They worshipped him;* bowed down in reverence. ‖ *Some doubted.* There might have been some present, besides the apostles, who might not before have seen Jesus since his resurrection; or while the principal part of the apostles distinctly perceived that it was Jesus, and accordingly made obeisance, the others might not have been wholly convinced that it was Jesus, till he actually came up to them.

18. *All power is given unto me, &c.* Compare John 17: 2. Acts 2: 36. Eph. 1: 20—22.

19. *Teach all nations;* not confining your labors to your countrymen, the Jews. The word here rendered *teach* is different from the word rendered *teaching* in the following verse, and properly signifies *make disciples.* The apostles were directed to go forth into all the world (see Mark 16: 15),

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

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wherever they could, and make known the facts and doctrines respecting Jesus and the new dispensation, and bring men to be disciples of Christ. ‖ *Baptizing them.* By being baptized, those who should embrace the doctrines of the disciples were to be separated from other men, in respect to religious matters, and to form a distinct religious community. ‖ *In the name of the Father*, &c.; that is, *unto the Father*, &c., as manifesting in this appropriate way their faith and obedience in respect to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. For explaining the phrase *in the name of*, compare 1 Cor. 1: 13 with 10: 2. The idea is, not that baptism was to be administered by the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, but that by baptism there was to be professed a subjection to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Those who should receive the doctrines of the apostles were to be baptized, and by baptism to testify their recognition of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, as the fountain of authority and the source of blessings.

20. *Whatsoever I have commanded you;* that is, during his previous instructions both before and after his crucifixion. ‖ *Unto the end of the world;* while the world shall stand. Compare 13: 39, 40. The language shows, that Jesus meant this injunction for all who should succeed the apostles in making known the gospel. So long as the gospel is unknown in any part of the world, it is the duty of the ministers and followers of Jesus to labor for its extension. Mark (16: 15, 16) gives the language of this commission in a slightly different form, but retaining the same meaning. Probably at various times, and in various ways, Jesus enjoined on the apostles the duty of making known every where the glad tidings; for he spent forty days on earth after his resurrection, and was during that time instructing his apostles. See Acts 1: 3.

The account which Matthew has given of events after the resurrection of Jesus, is very brief; the other evangelists have furnished additional information; and it is from their combined accounts that a full view of the events must be drawn. But it is, perhaps, not possible to arrive at complete certainty in regard to *the order* of the different events related by the four evangelists; nor is it necessary. Paul's statement, also, in 1 Cor. 15: 5—7, should be connected with the accounts given by the evangelists. By examining these several accounts, it will appear that there was most abundant and satisfactory proof that Jesus had actually risen from the dead.

In Mark 16: 19, 20; Luke 24: 50—53; and Acts 1: 9—12, may be found an account of his ascension to glory.

"All hail the power of Jesus' name!
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.

"O that, with yonder sacred throng,
We at his feet may fall!
We'll join the everlasting song,
And crown him Lord of all."

PREFACE

TO THE

GOSPEL OF MARK.

The evangelist Mark is generally believed to be the same person as John who was surnamed *Mark*, of whom frequent mention is made in the New Testament. His mother resided in Jerusalem, and in her house the early followers of Christ were in the habit of assembling. It was to her house that the apostle Peter repaired, when the angel had delivered him from prison. See Acts 12: 12, &c.

John, surnamed *Mark*, was the companion and assistant of Paul and Barnabas, in their evangelical labors. See Acts 12: 25. 13: 5. In one of their tours (see Acts 13: 13), John (the same person) left Paul and Barnabas, and returned to Jerusalem. In consequence of this, when Paul and Barnabas were proposing another tour, and Barnabas was desirous to take Mark with them, Paul made objections. Paul and Barnabas then separated, and Barnabas took with him Mark, and went to Cyprus. See Acts 15: 36—39. Barnabas doubtless felt a special interest in Mark, as being Mark's uncle (see Col. 4: 10), and willingly went to Cyprus, instead of accompanying Paul, inasmuch as Barnabas was a native of Cyprus (see Acts 4: 36). We read no more of Mark in the book of the Acts, as the remainder of that book is occupied in relating the labors of Paul.

In the Epistle to the Colossians (4: 10), in the Second Epistle to Timothy (4: 11), and in that to Philemon (v. 24), Paul makes very kind and respectful mention of Mark. Doubtless the apostle became satisfied with the truly upright and Christian character of Mark, and cheerfully admitted him to a corresponding place in his esteem and affections.

In 1 Pet. 5: 13, Mark is again mentioned; and in a manner which shows the high regard and warm affection of the apostle Peter for him, as a person whom he had taken under his special charge. The affectionate language there used is in accordance with the statement which has been handed down from the earliest Christian writers, that Mark was associated with Peter, as an assistant in his labors. It is his intimate connection with Peter, that has been considered, from the earliest times, as stamping his Gospel with authority. Mark himself was not an apostle; but having been associated with an apostle, and having enjoyed his confidence, he may be said to have reflected the authority of an apostle. From the earliest Christian antiquity, his book has been received as a sacred document, and those portions of the Christian community, for whose special benefit it was prepared, knew that it proceeded from an authoritative source.

Mark wrote for persons who were not Jews, and who lived out of Palestine. For he carefully explains Jewish terms and Jewish practices, which explanations would not be needed by Jewish readers, or by persons living in Palestine. As an instance, see 7: 2—4. It is according to ancient testimony, that he wrote at Rome. The very name of this writer agrees well with the circumstance of his having become very conversant with people who were not Jews. *John* was his Jewish name; *Mark* was his Roman name, by which he chose to be known among the Greeks and Romans, and it became at length his most usual name.

Mark's Gospel was published a short time, probably, after Matthew's.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK.

CHAPTER I.

THE beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;

2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee;

3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins.

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;

7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

CHAPTER I.

1. *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ.* The word *gospel*, originally signifying *glad tidings*, and specifically the glad tidings concerning the long-promised Messiah's approach, had come to signify *the religious dispensation* established by the Messiah, that is, *the Christian religion*, strictly so called. In giving an account of the life and death of Jesus Christ, Mark proposed to state what was the very beginning of this new dispensation, or religion. The words *this is* may be considered as implied at the opening of this verse. ‖ *The Son of God.* See on Matt. 3: 17.

2. *In the prophets;* Malachi and Isaiah. ‖ *Behold, I send,* &c. Mal. 3: 1. See on Matt. 11: 10.

3. *The voice,* &c. Is. 40 · 3 See on Matt. 3: 3.

4. *The wilderness.* See on Matt. 3: 1. ‖ *Baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;* that is, baptism which implied an acknowledgment of repentance, and was a pledge of repentance, and which had respect to the forgiveness of sins as connected with repentance. Compare Matt. 3: 6, 8. Thus Mark traces back the gospel, the Christian religion, to the earliest events immediately connected with it. John's ministry was the beginning of the gospel, as the dawn is the beginning of day.

5—7. Compare Matt. 3: 4—6

11. *The latchet of whose shoes.* Sandals were bound around the feet by a leather thong, or strap, here called *latchet.* To loose and to bind on sandals, was the business of the lowest servants.

8. Compare Matt. 3: 11, 12. Mark

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

10 And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit, like a dove, descending upon him.

11 And there came a voice from heaven, *saying*, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

12 And immediately the Spirit driveth him into the wilderness.

13 And he was there in the wilderness forty days tempted of Satan; and was with the wild beasts; and the angels ministered unto him.

14 Now, after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God,

15 And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

16 Now as he walked by the sea of Galilee, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17 And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

18 And straightway they forsook their nets, and followed him.

19 And when he had gone a little further thence, he saw James the *son* of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the ship mending their nets.

20 And straightway he called them: and they left their father Zebedee in the ship with the hired servants, and went after him.

21 And they went into Capernaum; and straightway on the Sabbath-day he entered into the synagogue and taught.

22 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and not as the scribes.

23 And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out,

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here expresses in part, and briefly, what Matthew has furnished in a more copious manner.

9—11. Compare Matt. 3: 13—17.

12, 13. Compare Matt. 4: 1—11. *Driveth.* The word thus rendered does not always signify a forcible driving, but the *inducing* of a person to go, by whatever means. The word in the original here used, is the same as is used in v. 43 (translated *sent away*), and in Matt. 9: 25, 38 (translated *put forth* and *sent forth*)

14, 15. Compare Matt. 4: 12—16. *The time is fulfilled;* the time predicted by the prophets, when the Messiah should come. ‖ *Believe the gospel;* believe, confide in, the joyful intelligence, and receive the instructions connected with it.

16—22. Compare Matt. 4: 18—25. *And they were astonished at his doctrine.* The word *doctrine* here includes both the instructions he communicated and the manner of communicating them; that is, his teaching. Compare Luke 4: 31, 32; also Matt. 7: 28, 29.

23. *A man with an unclean spirit.* The same idea is elsewhere expressed by the phrase *a man possessed with a devil*, that is, with a demon. See

24 Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

25 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him.

26 And when the unclean spirit had torn him, and cried with a loud voice, he came out of him.

27 And they were all amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves, saying, What thing is this? what new doctrine *is* this? for with authority commandeth he even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.

28 And immediately his fame spread abroad throughout all the region round about Galilee.

29 And forthwith, when they were come out of the synagogue, they entered into the house of Simon and Andrew, with James and John.

30 But Simon's wife's mother lay sick of a fever; and anon they tell him of her.

31 And he came and took her by the hand, and lifted her up; and immediately the fever left her, and she ministered unto them.

32 And at even when the sun did set, they brought unto him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with devils.

33 And all the city was gathered together at the door.

34 And he healed many that were sick of divers diseases, and cast out many devils; and suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.

35 And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he

Matt. 4: 24. The word *unclean* means *wicked, evil.*

24. *Let us alone.* The original word may be regarded as equivalent to our word *quit, desist;* or, which is the more probable, as an exclamation of sorrow and indignation; as, *Ah! Alas!* ‖ *What have we, &c.* See on Matt. 8: 29. ‖ *To destroy us?* to consign us to misery, to perdition. Compare Matt. 8: 29. ‖ *The Holy One of God;* the Messiah, as being *set apart,* or *consecrated by God* to his official work, and as being therefore a most venerable person.

26. *Torn him;* more properly, *convulsed him, thrown him into convulsions.* Thus Mark's account agrees with that of Luke (4: 35), who says, the evil demon *hurt him not.*

27. *What new doctrine;* what new sort of teaching. ‖ *Even the unclean spirits.* See on Matt. 8: 16.

29—31. Compare Matt. 8: 14, 15.

32. See on Matt. 8: 16.

33. *All the city;* Capernaum. v. 21. The expression is a general one, meaning that large numbers of the inhabitants crowded about the door. Compare 2: 2.

34. Compare Matt. 4: 23. *Suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him.* Jesus made no concealment, so far as his own testimony was concerned, of his being the Messiah; but he might have had very wise objections to being publicly called the Messiah by certain sorts of persons, and at certain times. Had no caution been exercised, his appearing as the Messiah might have been greatly abused.

35—39. Compare Luke 4: 42—44.

Observe, here, the devotion of Jesus to his public work, and, at the

went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36 And Simon, and they that were with him, followed after him.

37 And when they had found him, they said unto him, All *men* seek for thee.

38 And he said unto them, Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth.

39 And he preached in their synagogues throughout all Galilee, and cast out devils.

40 And there came a leper to him, beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

41 And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth *his* hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean.

42 And as soon as he had spoken, immediately the leprosy departed from him, and he was cleansed.

43 And he straitly charged him, and forthwith sent him away;

44 And saith unto him, See thou say nothing to any man; but go thy way, show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing those things which Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

45 But he went out, and began to publish *it* much, and to blaze abroad the matter, insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into the city, but was without in desert places; and they came to him from every quarter.

CHAPTER II.

AND again he entered into Capernaum, after *some* days; and it was noised that he was in the house.

2 And straightway many were gathered together, insomuch that there was no room to receive *them*, no, not so much as about the door: and he preached the word unto them.

3 And they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, which was borne of four.

4 And when they could not come nigh unto him for the press, they uncovered the roof where he was: and when they had broken *it* up, they let down the bed wherein the sick of the palsy lay.

5 When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.

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same time, his careful observance of secret prayer. His secret communion with his heavenly Father must not be interrupted; even though, to enjoy it, he must take time before day, and must retire from the habitations of men.

40—45. Compare Matt. 8: 2—4.

CHAPTER II.

2. *The word;* the doctrine, or instruction, pertaining to the new dispensation.

3—12. Compare Matt. 9: 2—8. *Borne of four;* carried by four men, who took hold of the bed. The bed, according to the custom of the place and time, was a mere rug, or quilt, or thin mattress. 4. *For the press;* on

6 But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts,

7 Why doth this *man* thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only?

8 And immediately, when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?

9 Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, *Thy* sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk?

10 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)

11 I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thy house.

12 And immediately he arose, took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion.

13 And he went forth again by the sea-side, and all the multitude resorted unto him, and he taught them.

14 And as he passed by, he saw Levi the *son* of Alpheus, sitting at the receipt of custom, and said unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.

15 And it came to pass, that as Jesus sat at meat in his

account of the crowd. ‖ *They uncovered the roof, &c.* The houses in Palestine were furnished with a flight of stairs outside, situated in, or near, the porch, so that persons could go up to the roof without entering the house. The roofs were nearly flat, and were surrounded by a balustrade, or breastwork (see Deut. 22 : 8), so as to prevent persons from falling off. The friends of the sick man could, then, without much difficulty, convey him to the roof of the house. As to the lower part of the house, there was a gate opening from the street into a porch; from this porch another gate led to an open space, enclosed on four sides, but open above, called *the court,* or area. This was provided with various conveniences for accommodating large companies; and it was in this court that Jesus and the company were assembled. Persons on the roof could look down into the court. It was, however, sometimes furnished with an awning, or large veil of thick cloth, to exclude the heat of the sun. In the present case, this awning was to be removed, and a portion of the breastwork broken through, so that the sick man, on his mattress, could be let down near to Jesus. The removing of the awning is what is here called *uncovering the roof;* and the breastwork they *broke* away, or *broke* through. The man could easily then be let down by the help of cords. Luke says (5 : 19) they "let him down through the tiling." The flooring, as we might call it, of the roofs, was a substance composed of broken coals, stones, ashes, and a sort of plaster. Such a substance gave occasion to the word translated *tiling* to be applied to the roof; and the whole roof, or the roofing, was expressed by it. Luke, then, used language just like our expression *they let him down by the roof;* somewhat as Paul was let down through a window by the wall. 2 Cor. 11 : 33.

13, 14. *By the sea-side;* the sea of Galilee. Compare Matt. 9 : 9. ‖ *Alpheus.* He is believed to be not the same as the Alpheus mentioned in Matt. 10 : 3.

15—22. Compare Matt. 9 : 10—17.

house, many publicans and sinners sat also together with Jesus and his disciples; for there were many, and they followed him.

16 And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?

17 When Jesus heard *it*, he saith unto them, They that are whole, have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

18 And the disciples of John, and of the Pharisees, used to fast: and they come, and say unto him, Why do the disciples of John, and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?

19 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber fast, while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

21 No man also seweth a piece of new cloth on an old garment: else the new piece that filled it up, taketh away from the old, and the rent is made worse.

22 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled, and the bottles will be marred: but new wine must be put into new bottles.

23 And it came to pass, that he went through the corn-fields on the Sabbath-day; and his disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn.

24 And the Pharisees said unto him, Behold, why do they on the Sabbath-day that which is not lawful?

25 And he said unto them, Have ye never read what David did, when he had need, and was a hungered, he and they that were with him?

26 How he went into the house of God, in the days of Abiathar the high priest, and did eat the show-bread, which is not lawful to eat, but for the priests, and gave also to them which were with him?

27 And he said unto them, The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath:

28 Therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

23—28. Compare Matt. 12: 1—8. *In the days of Abiathar the high priest.* It appears from 1 Sam. 21st ch., that Ahimelech was the high priest from whom David obtained the showbread. Abiathar became high priest after this event. The word translated *in the days of* may have a very extended signification, corresponding to our phrase *about the time of;* and as Abiathar continued in office a large number of years, his term of office might have been selected, as marking a certain period in Hebrew history, rather than Ahimelech's. Again; the word used in the original may be regarded only as a method of referring to that portion of

CHAPTER III.

AND he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.

2 And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the Sabbath-day; that they might accuse him.

3 And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.

4 And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

5 And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he stretched *it* out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

6 And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him.

7 But Jesus withdrew himself with his disciples to the sea: and a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and from Judea,

8 And from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and *from* beyond Jordan; and they about Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they had heard what great things he did, came unto him.

9 And he spake to his disci-

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the sacred history in which the account of Abiathar occurs; and the whole portion respecting Ahimelech and Abiathar would be included under such a reference. The Jews were in the habit of quoting, or referring to, their sacred books by the use of such a word as here occurs in the original.

CHAPTER III.

1—12. Compare Matt. 12: 9—21. 4. *Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath-days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill?* These questions might be understood as meaning, *Is it right to do good, or not to do it, on the Sabbath? to save life, or not to save it?* A similar manner of expression occurs in Mal. 1: 2, 3, quoted in Rom. 9: 13—*Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated;* that is, Esau have I not loved, comparatively speaking. The form of the questions was such, also, as might very naturally suggest to the minds of his opponents a comparison between themselves and him. *He* was bestowing blessings on the afflicted; *they* were plotting his destruction. To their consciences he might have intended to appeal, by presenting the inquiry, whether he was pursuing a justifiable course on the Sabbath, or they. 5. *With anger;* with displeasure at their perverseness — a feeling which was consistent with the utmost tenderness, and which arose from a view of their perverseness and their willingness to put a bad construction even on his most benevolent acts. 6. *The Herodians.* See on Matt. 22: 16. 8. *Idumea.* This is properly the name of the country south-east of Palestine. It is called *Edom* in the Old Testament. Its inhabitants were hostile to the Jews, and were conquered by David. 2 Sam. 8: 14. They frequently revolted, and in the reign of Jehoram gained their independence. 2 Kings 8: 20. During the captivity of the Jews in Babylon, the Idumeans, that is, the Edomites, took possession of the southern part of Palestine, as far as the city Hebron; so that that part of the country was subsequently called *Idumea.* The name

ples, that a small ship should wait on him, because of the multitude, lest they should throng him.

10 For he had healed many; insomuch that they pressed upon him for to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11 And unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him, and cried, saying, Thou art the Son of God.

12 And he straitly charged them that they should not make him known.

13 And he goeth up into a mountain, and calleth *unto him* whom he would: and they came unto him.

14 And he ordained twelve, that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach,

15 And to have power to heal sicknesses, and to cast out devils.

16 And Simon he surnamed Peter;

17 And James the *son* of Zebedee, and John the brother of James, (and he surnamed them Boanerges, which is, The sons of thunder,)

18 And Andrew, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the *son* of Alpheus, and Thaddeus, and Simon the Canaanite,

19 And Judas Iscariot, which also betrayed him: and they went into a house.

20 And the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread.

21 And when his friends heard *of it*, they went out to

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is here applied by Mark to that part of the land. The Idumeans were afterwards again subdued, and became, at least those who lived in Palestine, a part of the Jewish nation. ‖ *Tyre and Sidon.* See Matt. 11: 22. 10. *Plagues;* sicknesses, called *plagues*, or *scourges*, as being sent in the righteous providence of God, in consequence of sin. 11, 12. Compare 1: 34.

13. *Up into a mountain;* or, as we sometimes say, *up a mountain*, or *up on a mountain.* Here Jesus spent much time in prayer, as he was now about to select a few who were ultimately to be his apostles. See Luke 6: 12.

It is gratifying and instructive to NOTICE with what assiduous prayer our Saviour proceeded in every step of his progress. Let him be our example.

14. *He ordained;* appointed. The idea of *appointing*, or *designating*, is here expressed, without reference to the manner in which the appointment was made. Jesus doubtless merely made known to them his desire that they should be habitually with him for instruction, and for being employed by him in announcing the Messiah's having come. Compare the following words.

16—19. Compare Matt. 10: 2—4. 17. *Boanerges;* a word compounded of two words used in the Hebrew dialect of that time. Why this name was applied to James and John, cannot be decided. There might have been something remarkable in their manner of speaking; or perhaps the impetuosity of their disposition (see Luke 9: 54) might have occasioned the use of this name.

20, 21. *His friends;* some of those who were associated with him. The expression here used, in the original, is sometimes explained as meaning strictly *his relatives;* but there is sat-

lay hold on him: for they said, He is beside himself.

22 And the scribes which came down from Jerusalem, said, He hath Beelzebub, and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils.

23 And he called them *unto him*, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan cast out Satan?

24 And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand.

25 And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand.

26 And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end.

27 No man can enter into a strong man's house and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.

28 Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme:

29 But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation:

30 Because they said, He hath an unclean spirit.

31 There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him.

32 And the multitude sat about him; and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee.

33 And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren?

34 And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!

35 For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother.

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isfactory evidence that it is employed in a wider sense. || *To lay hold on him;* not violently, but in a suitable manner, taking hold of his hand, endeavoring to induce him to come into the house. || *He is beside himself.* An exaggerated remark, doubtless, occasioned by the fervid devotion which Jesus felt to his official work, and which made him disregard his personal convenience and comfort.

22—30. Compare Matt. 12: 24—37.

31—35. Compare Matt. 12: 46—50. It would seem that the friends who went out to persuade Jesus to come into the house, did not prevail with him. The occasion was a very important one. A man possessed with a demon, it seems (Matt. 12: 22, &c.), was brought to him, and he immediately, without taking food (Mark 3: 20), attended to the application. The scribes and Pharisees at once began to speak against his miraculous operations, and Jesus was occupied in meeting their cavils. Thus he could not yield to the solicitations of his friends. Afterwards, his mother and brethren (or kinsmen) made an effort to secure his return to the house.

NOTICE, here, the readiness of Jesus to be engaged in his appropriate work, both in season and out of season. Compare John 4: 34.

CHAPTER IV.

AND he began again to teach by the sea-side; and there was gathered unto him a great multitude, so that he entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land.

2 And he taught them many things by parables, and said unto them, in his doctrine,

3 Hearken: Behold, there went out a sower to sow;

4 And it came to pass, as he sowed, some fell by the way-side, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it up.

5 And some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth:

6 But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked it, and it yielded no fruit.

8 And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased, and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some a hundred.

9 And he said unto them, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

10 And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable.

11 And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all *these* things are done in parables:

12 That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and *their* sins should be forgiven them.

13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? and how then will ye know all parables?

CHAPTER IV.

1—9. Compare Matt. 13: 1—9.

10. *When he was alone;* that is, in the absence of the people; when there were present only the twelve disciples and a few others, who felt specially interested in the Saviour's instructions. ‖ *Asked of him the parable;* the explanation of the parable.

11. *Them that are without;* them that do not belong to my company, who do not seek and do not enjoy intimate familiarity with me, as being deeply interested in my teaching.

12. In order to understand this verse, it is desirable to read Matt. 13: 11—15, with the notes on those verses. The more copious language of Matthew in those verses furnishes aid in explaining the more brief language of Mark in this. *That.* The Greek particle thus rendered has sometimes the same meaning as the particle used by Matthew (13: 13), and signifying *for that*, or *because.* By the aid of this remark, the idea contained in the verse under consideration may be thus expressed: "for that (or because) though they see, yet they do not perceive; though they hear, yet they do not understand; so that they are not converted, [so that they do not turn from their sins,] and their sins are not forgiven them." ‖ *Lest.* See on Matt. 13: 15. The original word thus rendered

14 The sower soweth the word.

15 And these are they by the way-side, where the word is sown; but when they have heard, Satan cometh immediately, and taketh away the word that was sown in their hearts.

16 And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness;

17 And have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterward, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended.

18 And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word,

19 And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

20 And these are they which are sown on good ground; such as hear the word, and receive *it*, and bring forth fruit, some thirty-fold, some sixty, and some a hundred.

21 And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick?

22 For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad.

23 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

24 And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall

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expresses the idea which we express by the terms "*so that* [they will] *not*," &c.

14—20. Compare Matt. 13: 18—23.

21. *A candle — bushel — candlestick.* See on Matt. 5: 15. ‖ *Under a bed.* Beds, in the East, did not admit of a lamp's being placed under them; bedsteads, like ours, not being in use. Mattresses, or quilts, laid on an elevation, in a side of the room, composed the bed. The original word here signifies, not a bed to sleep on, but a couch on which the people reclined at their meals, and which was elevated three or four feet above the floor. By the comparison here employed, the Saviour showed his disciples that more abundant instruction was given to them than to the multitude, in order that they might impart to others the benefits which they had received from their Master. On them it would be incumbent to spread divine instruction.

22. *Manifested.* No part of the Saviour's instructions was intended to be always kept in obscurity; his design was, that in due time the truths which he was communicating should be distinctly and fully apprehended. When that time should arrive, his disciples were to be employed in the work of announcing and explaining his doctrines to the world.

23. *Let him hear.* It was the duty, then, of the disciples to hear attentively, and become prepared for their work.

24. *What ye hear;* probably, *in what manner ye hear.* Compare Luke 8: 18. The idea would be well expressed thus: "*Take heed to* (that is, consider carefully) *what ye hear.*" ‖ *With what measure, &c.*; a common

be measured to you; and unto you that hear shall more be given.

25 For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath.

26 And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground;

27 And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how.

28 For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear; after that, the full corn in the ear.

29 But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come.

30 And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31 *It is* like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth:

32 But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it.

33 And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear *it*.

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proverb, applicable in various circumstances. See Matt. 7: 2. The general meaning is, You will be treated as you treat others. In applying this thought to the present occasion, the Saviour is to be understood as saying, I will conduct, as a teacher, towards you, in a manner corresponding to that in which you, as my disciples, conduct towards me. If you value my instructions, and profit by them, you shall receive more instruction. || *You that hear;* that is, hear profitably.

25. Compare Matt. 13: 12.

26—29. *And he said;* that is, to the multitude. Compare v. 34. Perhaps this parable was spoken on a different occasion. The precise order in which the parables were delivered, is not observed by the sacred writers, it being of comparatively little importance. || *The kingdom of God.* See on Matt. 3: 2. || *He knoweth not how;* he understands not the process; yet it goes on. || *Of herself;* spontaneously, without human aid, after the seed is sown. || *The full corn;* the grain, wheat, for instance. From the growth of grain, Jesus drew an illustration respecting his religion. The husbandman commits the seed to the ground, and there quietly leaves it. By the care of divine providence, it springs up, and produces mature fruit, which at the proper time is gathered in. So, the principles of the Messiah's religion were communicated to men; God will make them efficacious, and secure the spread of them; blessed results will infallibly grow from these principles, in the spiritual welfare and salvation of men.

The history of the Christian religion affords the appropriate illustration of this parable. Christianity has been exerting its influence; it has produced happy results; and when the end of the world shall have come, countless multitudes, sanctified and redeemed, will be welcomed to the holiness and bliss of heaven.

30—32. Compare Matt. 13: 31, 32.

33. *As they were able to hear it.* Jesus accommodated himself, in his teaching, to the ability of the people. He knew their ignorance and their prepossessions; and like a wise, affectionate teacher, he adapted his in-

34 But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples.

35 And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side.

36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship: and there were also with him other little ships.

37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full.

38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

40 And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? how is it that ye have no faith?

41 And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

CHAPTER V.

AND they came over unto the other side of the sea, into the country of the Gadarenes.

2 And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit,

3 Who had *his* dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains:

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structions to their necessities and their capacities. This remark of the evangelist confirms the view presented of v. 12; and shows that the Saviour was not harsh, and did not deal in vengeance with the ignorant, misjudging multitude; but in a patient and condescending manner sought to gain a lodgement in their hearts for the great principles of his religion. How worthy an example for ministers of the gospel, for parents, and for all who are engaged in the work of religious instruction!

34. *Expounded;* explained.

35—41. Compare Matt. 8: 18, 23—27. *They took him even as he was in the ship;* just as he then was, without waiting to make any particular preparation for the tour, and without any intermission of his labors.

40. *No faith.* Compare Matt. 8: 26, who relates that Jesus said, *O ye of little faith.* In animated speaking or description, expressions are often used which are not to be strictly understood. In the present instance, Jesus did not mean to charge the disciples with an utter destitution of faith; but with a lamentable deficiency of it, shown by their being filled with terror. Their going to Jesus in the midst of their fears, shows that they had some confidence in him as able to rescue them from danger.

REFLECTION. Trusting in the goodness and power of God is the best relief amid the sorrows of life. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." Is. 26: 3.

CHAPTER V.

1—20. Compare Matt. 8: 28—34.

6. *Worshipped him;* prostrated him-

4 Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any *man* tame him.

5 And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones.

6 But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him,

7 And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of the Most High God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not.

8 (For he said unto him, Come out of the man, *thou* unclean spirit.)

9 And he asked him, What *is* thy name? And he answered, saying, My name *is* Legion: for we are many.

10 And he besought him much that he would not send them away out of the country.

11 Now there was there nigh unto the mountains a great herd of swine feeding.

12 And all the devils besought him, saying, Send us into the swine, that we may enter into them.

13 And forthwith Jesus gave them leave. And the unclean spirits went out and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, (they were about two thousand,) and were choked in the sea.

14 And they that fed the swine fled, and told *it* in the city, and in the country. And they went out to see what it was that was done.

15 And they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind; and they were afraid.

16 And they that saw *it* told them how it befell to him that was possessed with the devil, and *also* concerning the swine.

17 And they began to pray him to depart out of their coasts.

18 And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him.

19 Howbeit Jesus suffered him not; but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.

20 And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all *men* did marvel.

21 And when Jesus was passed over again by ship unto the other side, much people

self before him. 9. *Legion.* This was the name of a division in the Roman armies, comprising a few thousands of men. Hence the word came to be used indefinitely for *a multitude.*

15. *In his right mind.* The man had been deranged through the influence of evil spirits. 20. *Decapolis.* See on Matt. 4: 25.

21—24. Compare Matt. 9: 1, 18, 19.

gathered unto him, and he was nigh unto the sea.

22 And, behold, there cometh one of the rulers of the synagogue, Jairus by name; and when he saw him, he fell at his feet,

23 And besought him greatly, saying, My little daughter lieth at the point of death; *I pray thee*, come and lay thy hands on her, that she may be healed; and she shall live.

24 And *Jesus* went with him; and much people followed him, and thronged him.

25 And a certain woman, which had an issue of blood twelve years,

26 And had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all that she had, and was nothing bettered, but rather grew worse,

27 When she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment:

28 For she said, If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole.

29 And straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in *her* body that she was healed of that plague.

30 And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him, turned him about in the press, and said, Who touched my clothes?

31 And his disciples said unto him, Thou seest the multitude thronging thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

32 And he looked round about to see her that had done this thing.

33 But the woman, fearing and trembling, knowing what was done in her, came and fell down before him, and told him all the truth.

34 And he said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole: go in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

35 While he yet spake, there came from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, *certain* which said, Thy daughter is dead; why troublest thou the Master any further?

36 As soon as Jesus heard the word that was spoken, he saith unto the ruler of the synagogue, Be not afraid, only believe.

37 And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James.

38 And he cometh to the house of the ruler of the syn-

25—34. Compare Matt. 9: 20—22. 27. *The press;* the crowd. 29. *Plague.* See on 3: 10. 30. *Virtue;* healing power.

35—43. Compare Matt. 9: 23—26. 41. *Talitha cumi.* These are two words in the dialect of Hebrew which was spoken in the time of our Lord, and which are explained as meaning, *Damsel, arise.* 43. *That no man should know it.* This injunction was doubtless merely a temporary one, on account of some existing circumstances. Jesus was not anxious that all his deeds of benevolence should be publicly known and celebrated; and the current of popular favor, which would be increased by his miracles, needed to be regulated with much prudence.

agogue, and seeth the tumult, and them that wept and wailed greatly.

39 And when he was come in, he saith unto them, Why make ye this ado, and weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth.

40 And they laughed him to scorn. But when he had put them all out, he taketh the father and the mother of the damsel, and them that were with him, and entereth in where the damsel was lying.

41 And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi; which is, being interpreted, Damsel (I say unto thee), arise.

42 And straightway the damsel arose, and walked; for she was *of the age* of twelve years. And they were astonished with a great astonishment.

43 And he charged them straitly that no man should know it; and commanded that something should be given her to eat.

CHAPTER VI.

AND he went out from thence, and came into his own country; and his disciples follow him.

2 And when the Sabbath-day was come, he began to teach in the synagogue: and many hearing *him* were astonished, saying, From whence hath this *man* these things? and what wisdom *is* this which is given unto him, that even such mighty works are wrought by his hands?

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

4 But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honor, but in his own country, and among his own kin, and in his own house.

5 And he could there do no mighty works, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed *them*.

6 And he marvelled because of their unbelief. And he went round about the villages, teaching.

7 And he called *unto him* the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;

8 And commanded them that they should take nothing for

CHAPTER VI.

1—6. Compare Matt. 13: 54—58. 3. *Brother — sisters.* These words are used in the Bible with more latitude than among us, and signify *near relatives*, as well as own brothers and sisters. By Matt. 27: 56, it appears that the mother of James and Joses was a different person from the mother of Jesus; they were probably sisters, or cousins, and the persons here mentioned were, at least in part, very near kinsmen of Jesus. 6. *He marvelled.* It was indeed suited to excite wonder, that the people of Nazareth should withhold from Jesus their confidence in his claim, after all that they had known of his private life and of his public acts.

7—11. Compare Matt. 10: 1—15.

their journey, save a staff only; no scrip, no bread, no money in *their* purse:

9 But *be* shod with sandals; and not put on two coats.

10 And he said unto them, In what place soever ye enter into a house, there abide till ye depart from that place.

11 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear you, when ye depart thence, shake off the dust under your feet for a testimony against them. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment, than for that city.

12 And they went out, and preached that men should repent.

13 And they cast out many devils, and anointed with oil many that were sick, and healed *them*.

14 And king Herod heard *of him* (for his name was spread abroad); and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do show forth themselves in him.

15 Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets.

16 But when Herod heard *thereof*, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead.

17 For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her.

18 For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19 Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:

20 For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

21 And when a convenient day was come, that Herod, on his birth-day, made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee;

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12. *That men should repent.* See on Matt. 3 : 2.

13. *Anointed with oil.* Among the Jews, oil was very frequently used as a medical application. Some of the cases of sickness cured during this tour, perhaps, did not need miraculous power; and even when the oil was used, as a means of restoring health, special divine power might have accompanied the application.

14—29. Compare Matt. 14 : 1—12. 15. *Elias.* See on Matt. 11 : 14. 20. *Feared John;* reverenced him. ‖ *Observed him.* The idea expressed by the original is, *preserved, protected* him, that is, probably, from the ill-will of Herodias. Herod himself so disliked John's faithfulness, as to be willing to put him to death. See Matt. 14 : 5. Yet through fear of the people, and reverence for his holy character, he interposed in his behalf when Herodias sought his death. 21. *Convenient day;* a time suitable for accomplishing the desires of Herodias. ‖ *Lords;* chief men. ‖ *High captains;* principal military commanders. ‖ *Chief estates of Galilee;* the other most distinguished men in Gal-

22 And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and danced, and pleased Herod, and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee.

23 And he sware unto her, Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24 And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25 And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou give me, by and by, in a charger, the head of John the Baptist.

26 And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

27 And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,

28 And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29 And when his disciples heard *of it*, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

30 And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31 And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32 And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

33 And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran a-foot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion towards them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

35 And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed;

36 Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread for they have nothing to eat.

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ilee. One of the definitions of the word *estates*, in the plural number, in our language, is, "orders or classes of men in society or government." 22. *Them that sat with him;* his guests, reclining with him, according to the custom of the time. 23. *The half of my kingdom.* See on Matt. 2 : 22.

30. *And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus;* that is, on returning from their mission. See v. 7. Compare Luke 9 : 10.

31—44. Compare Matt. 14 : 13—21. 34. *As sheep.* See on Matt. 9 : 36.

37 He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

38 He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? Go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

39 And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40 And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41 And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

42 And they did all eat, and were filled.

43 And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44 And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

45 And straightway he constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go to the other side before unto Bethsaida, while he sent away the people.

46 And when he had sent them away, he departed into a mountain to pray.

47 And when even was come, the ship was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

48 And he saw them toiling in rowing, (for the wind was contrary unto them:) and about the fourth watch of the night he cometh unto them, walking upon the sea, and would have passed by them.

49 But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out:

50 (For they all saw him, and were troubled:) and immediately he talked with them, and saith unto them, Be of good cheer: it is I; be not afraid.

51 And he went up unto them into the ship; and the wind ceased: and they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered.

52 For they considered not *the miracle* of the loaves; for their heart was hardened.

53 And when they had passed over, they came into the land of Gennesaret, and drew to the shore.

54 And when they were come out of the ship, straightway they knew him,

55 And ran through that whole region round about, and began to carry about in beds those that were sick, where they heard he was.

37. *Two hundred pennyworth.* The coin expressed by the word *penny* was equal, according to some computations, to nine, according to others, to fourteen cents of our money.

45—56. Compare Matt. 14: 22—36. *Unto Bethsaida.* From Luke 9: 10, it appears that the Saviour and his company went to Bethsaida on the east of the sea of Galilee.

56 And whithersoever he entered, into villages, or cities, or country, they laid the sick in the streets, and besought him that they might touch if it were but the border of his garment; and as many as touched him were made whole.

CHAPTER VII.

THEN came together unto him, the Pharisees and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.

2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashen) hands, they found fault.

3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.

4 And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, *as* the washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables.

5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you, hypocrites! as it is written, This people honoreth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me.

7 Howbeit, in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.

They were at this time returning to the Bethsaida which was on the west of the sea. There were two towns of the same name. The Bethsaida on the east was also called *Julias*.

CHAPTER VII.

1—23. With these verses, Matt. 15: 1—20 should be compared. Mark, in verses 3 and 4, mentions certain customs which were frequently observed among the Jews, and which gave occasion to the scribes and Pharisees to find fault with Jesus.

3. *All the Jews;* the Jews in general. ‖ *Oft.* The meaning of the original word, thus rendered, is not perfectly clear. The primary signification of the word was, probably, *fist.* To do a thing *with the fist* was probably equivalent to the expression, to do a thing *diligently, carefully.* The signification *carefully* is recommended by sufficient reasons. ‖ *Wash.* The original word, thus rendered in this verse, corresponds well with our word *wash.*

4. *From the market;* the place of public concourse, for buying and selling, &c. ‖ *Except they wash.* The original word, here rendered *wash,* is a different one from the word thus rendered in the preceding verse. It is the word which is usually rendered *baptize,* and which differs from the word used in the preceding verse, by distinctly conveying the notion of a copious use of water. The evangelist had a particular design in using here a word different from the one which he had employed in the preceding verse; because here he was stating a different case from the one there mentioned. The Jews were so scrupulous in regard to outward defilement, that, as Mark states, they would not partake of food without first washing their hands, even if they had not been away from home, nor among any but well-known friends, lest there might have come upon their hands, ignorantly to themselves, something that would make their food polluted; for their food was taken up

8 For, laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, *as* the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.

9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

10 For Moses said, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Whoso curseth father or mother, let him die the death.

11 But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, *It is* corban, that is to say, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; *he shall be free.*

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in their fingers in order to be conveyed to the mouth. But if they had gone to the market-place, where they would be exposed to all sorts of men and of things, then, having returned home, they would not eat without a more thorough application of water, namely, either a bathing of their whole persons, or a dipping of their hands into water, so as to be sure that water had covered every part which had been exposed to any impurity. An attention to these different practices, and to the precise meaning of the different words used in the original, sheds light on this passage, and shows that what Mark has said in the fourth verse, is not a mere repetition of what he had said in the third verse. The different circumstances in which a person had been, a little while before, taking food, rendered it necessary, in order to satisfy his scruples of conscience, to use water in different ways; sometimes a partial use would suffice, but at other times a more serious and thorough use of the purifying element was demanded. Though it is not certain, that on returning from market, the Jews always bathed their whole persons, yet learned authorities clearly show that there were among the Jews two methods of applying water for ceremonial purifying. These two methods may be expressed by calling the one a washing of the hands, by pouring water on them, and the other, an immersing, either of the whole person, or of the hands, in water. ‖ *The washing of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables.* More in accordance with the original, *the immersion* of cups, &c. In Lev. 11 : 32, it is directed, in regard to any vessel, on which the dead body of an unclean animal had fallen, "whatsoever vessel it be, wherein any work is done, it must be *put into water*," in order to be cleansed; except earthen vessels, which, being thus polluted, were required to be broken in pieces. Lev. 11 : 33. This precept of Moses appears to have been extended, after his time, to cases of uncleanness from other causes than the touch of a dead body; and the rule appears to have become general, that the purifying of unclean vessels was to be performed by dipping them in water. The word rendered *tables*, in this verse, means the *couches* on which the Jews reclined at their meals. These, too, according to Jewish rules, were to be cleansed by being covered in water; and so precise were the regulations in regard to such cleansing, that, should there be any thing adhering to those articles, such as pitch, which might prevent the water from actually touching the wood in a particular spot, the cleansing would not have been duly performed. According to the same regulations, even beds (beds, however, then used, were different articles from those which we use; see Matt. 9 : 6) were required to be cleansed by immersion. Nor would the size of an article be an insuperable hinderance to such a cleansing; for the rules allowed a cleansing, part by part, provided the whole should ultimately thus be covered with water.

11. *Corban;* a word signifying, in the Hebrew of Mark's time, *a gift*, that is, a gift devoted to God for the

12 And ye suffer him no more to do aught for his father, or his mother;

13 Making the word of God of none effect, through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.

14 And when he had called all the people *unto him*, he said unto them, Hearken unto me, every one *of you*, and understand.

15 There is nothing from without a man, that, entering into him, can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man.

16 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear.

17 And when he was entered into the house, from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18 And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, *it* cannot defile him:

19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats?

20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man.

21 For, from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders,

22 Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness.

23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.

24 And from thence, he arose and went into the borders of Tyre and Sidon; and entered into a house, and would have no man know *it:* but he could not be hid.

25 For a *certain* woman, whose young daughter had an unclean spirit, heard of him, and came and fell at his feet;

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service of the temple. See on Matt. 15 : 5.

12. *And ye suffer him no more to do aught*, &c. A person having presented to the temple what he ought to have employed for the comfort of his parents, was, in this way, hindered from doing them service; for what had been devoted to the temple was devoted in connection with imprecations upon himself, if he should otherwise employ it; so that it could not be reclaimed.

17. *The parable.* See on Matt. 15 : 15.

19. *Purging all meats.* The word *meats* is here equivalent to our phrase *sorts of food.* The word rendered *purging* signifies, here, *making lawful;* as things which, according to the ceremonial law, were *clean*, were allowed to be used. The clause *purging all meats*, that is, *rendering lawful all sorts of food*, refers to *the sentiment* which the Saviour had just expressed concerning food, namely, that it affects not the heart, but only the body, the animal frame. That fact respecting food, namely, that it does not affect the *heart* [the moral nature], but only the body [the animal nature], renders lawful all articles of food; so that real defilement does not depend on what a man eats and drinks.

22. *An evil eye;* an envious eye, that is, envy. See Matt. 20 : 15.

24—30. Compare Matt. 15 : 21—28.

26 (The woman was a Greek, a Syrophenician by nation;) and she besought him that he would cast forth the devil out of her daughter.

27 But Jesus said unto her, Let the children first be filled; for it is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* unto the dogs.

28 And she answered and said unto him, Yes, Lord: yet the dogs under the table eat of the children's crumbs.

29 And he said unto her, For this saying, go thy way; the devil is gone out of thy daughter.

30 And when she was come to her house, she found the devil gone out, and her daughter laid upon the bed.

31 And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis.

32 And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him.

33 And he took him aside, from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue,

34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.

35 And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.

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31. *Decapolis.* See on Matt. 4: 25. In passing from the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon to the sea of Galilee, through the region of Decapolis, Jesus made a circuitous route. His reason for so doing, might have been to avoid, for the present, meeting with the scribes and Pharisees, who cherished a hostile spirit towards him, and with whom he did not wish to come in collision, except when it was necessary.

32. *To put his hand upon him;* an act in connection with which healing was performed. See Matt. 9: 18. Luke 4: 40.

33. *He took him aside,&c.* Jesus had some special reasons for performing the cure in the way here described. What his reasons were, we can only conjecture. As the man was deaf, he might not have received much knowledge respecting Jesus; and the Saviour took this method, perhaps, to excite in his mind the expectation of a cure. On other occasions, he employed other external acts in connection with the performing of a miracle. See the passages referred to on the preceding verse, and compare John 9: 6, 7. Such acts as these, having no natural power to impart a blessing, might have been employed so as to show clearly that the power of performing cures did properly consist in his own will, and did not depend at all on outward circumstances. While our Lord saw fit, in order to prepare a person for the blessing, to employ some outward acts as significant of a cure to be performed, he also showed, that his power could exert itself in connection with *any* outward acts, or without any outward acts.

34. *He sighed;* like a person under strong emotion, deeply affected by human woes, and offering silent prayer. Compare Rom. 8: 26, in which passage the inward workings of a deeply-affected heart are expressed by a word [*groanings*] in the original, of the same import as the word here translated *sighed.*

35. *The string of his tongue was loosed;* literally, *the band of his tongue*

36 And he charged them that they should tell no man: but the more he charged them, so much the more, a great deal, they published *it;*

37 And were, beyond measure, astonished, saying, He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN those days, the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called his disciples *unto him*, and saith unto them,

2 I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days, and have nothing to eat:

3 And if I send them away, fasting, to their own houses, they will faint by the way; for divers of them came from far.

4 And his disciples answered him, From whence can a man satisfy these *men* with bread, here in the wilderness?

5 And he asked them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven.

6 And he commanded the people to sit down on the ground: and he took the seven loaves, and gave thanks, and brake, and gave to his disciples to set before *them;* and they did set *them* before the people.

7 And they had a few small fishes: and he blessed, and commanded to set them also before *them.*

8 So they did eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken *meat*, that was left, seven baskets.

9 And they that had eaten were about four thousand: and he sent them away.

10 And straightway he entered into a ship, with his disciples, and came into the parts of Dalmanutha.

11 And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him.

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was loosed; meaning, that which bound his tongue from performing its office, namely, the disease, or the natural infirmity. In other words, his tongue was unbound; that is, his impediment was removed.

36. *That they should tell no man.* Jesus did not perform his works to excite popular applause, nor to provoke the ill-will of the scribes and Pharisees. When there was reason to believe that such would be the results of proclaiming his benevolent miracles, he rather preferred that publicity should not be given to them. He was contented with making a salutary impression on those who had been personally benefited, and those who had witnessed his deeds. He knew that thus an influence would be operating on the hearts of individuals, far more in accordance with his designs, and far more useful, than any popular excitement that might be created in his favor.

37. *He hath done all things well.* How seasonable and how appropriate the reflection! And shall not we adopt it respecting our Lord Jesus Christ, as procuring pardon, and holiness, and eternal life for the guilty and perishing children of men?

CHAPTER VIII.

1—10. Compare Matt. 15: 32—39.
11—21. Compare Matt. 16: 1—12.

12 And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? Verily, I say unto you, There shall no sign be given to this generation.

13 And he left them, and entering into the ship again, departed to the other side.

14 Now *the disciples* had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and *of* the leaven of Herod.

16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have no bread.

17 And when Jesus knew *it*, he saith unto them, Why reason ye, because ye have no bread? perceive ye not yet, neither understand? have ye your heart yet hardened?

18 Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?

19 When I brake the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? They say unto him, Twelve.

20 And when the seven among four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments took ye up? And they said, Seven.

21 And he said unto them, How is it that ye do not understand?

22 And he cometh to Bethsaida; and they bring a blind man unto him, and besought him to touch him.

23 And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw aught.

24 And he looked up, and said, I see men, as trees, walking.

25 After that, he put *his* hands again upon his eyes, and made him look up; and he was restored, and saw every man clearly.

26 And he sent him away to his house, saying, Neither go into the town, nor tell *it* to any in the town.

27 And Jesus went out, and his disciples, into the towns of Cesarea Philippi: and by the way, he asked his disciples, saying unto them, Whom do men say that I am?

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22. *Bethsaida.* The connection does not enable us to decide whether this was the Bethsaida on the east of the sea, or the town of the same name on the west. || *To touch him;* so that he might be healed. See on 7: 32.

23. *And he took,* &c. Jesus had some special reasons for proceeding in this manner, as he had in the case related in 7: 31—35. What they were, we cannot tell with certainty.

24. *Men, as trees, walking* His sight was beginning to return; and he could discern objects, though indistinctly. His knowing something respecting the appearance of trees, and that the objects before him were not in reality trees, shows that he had not been blind from his birth. His blindness had resulted from disease.

27—38. Compare Matt. 16: 13—

27. *Towns of Cesarea Philippi;* the villages around Cesarea Philippi.

28 And they answered, John the Baptist: but some *say*, Elias: and others, One of the prophets.

29 And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.

30 And he charged them, that they should tell no man of him.

31 And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and *of* the chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

32 And he spake that saying openly. And Peter took him, and began to rebuke him.

33 But when he had turned about, and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

34 And when he had called the people *unto him*, with his disciples also, he said unto them, Whosoever will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

35 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it.

36 For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?

37 Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

38 Whosoever, therefore, shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels.

CHAPTER IX.

AND he said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.

2 And after six days, Jesus taketh *with him* Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into a high mountain, apart, by themselves; and he was transfigured before them.

3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them.

4 And there appeared unto them Elias, with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus.

5 And Peter answered and said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

This city was situated in the northern part of Galilee, at the foot of mount Hermon, near the sources of the Jordan; and is generally supposed to have been the same place as was anciently called *Leshem*, or *Laish*, and subsequently *Dan*. See Josh. 19: 47. Judg. 18: 27, 29. It was named, after being rebuilt and enlarged, Cesarea Philippi, by Philip the tetrarch, in honor of himself and the reigning emperor of Rome, Tiberius Cesar.

CHAPTER IX.

1. Compare Matt. 16: 28.
2—13. Compare Matt. 17: 1—13.

6 For he wist not what to say: for they were sore afraid.

7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

8 And suddenly, when they had looked round about, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only with themselves.

9 And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.

10 And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean.

11 And they asked him, saying, Why say the scribes that Elias must first come?

12 And he answered and told them, Elias verily cometh first, and restoreth all things; and how it is written of the Son of man, that he must suffer many things, and be set at nought.

13 But I say unto you, That Elias is indeed come, and they have done unto him whatsoever they listed, as it is written of him.

14 And when he came to *his* disciples, he saw a great multitude about them, and the scribes questioning with them.

15 And straightway all the people, when they beheld him, were greatly amazed, and running to *him*, saluted him.

16 And he asked the scribes, What question ye with them?

17 And one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit:

18 And wheresoever he taketh him, he teareth him; and he foameth and gnasheth with his teeth, and pineth away; and I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out, and they could not.

19 He answereth him, and saith, O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me.

20 And they brought him unto him: and when he saw him, straightway the spirit tare him; and he fell on the ground, and wallowed, foaming.

21 And he asked his father, How long is it ago since this came unto him? And he said, Of a child.

22 And ofttimes it hath cast him into the fire, and into the waters to destroy him: but if thou canst do any thing, have compassion on us, and help us.

23 Jesus said unto him, If

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13. *They listed.* See on Matt. 17: 12. 14—29. Compare Matt. 17: 14—21. 15. *Were greatly amazed.* The coming of Jesus to the company was unexpected; but it was very opportune, as his disciples were harassed by the scribes. 23. *If thou canst believe.* This remark was made with reference to what the father of the afflicted person had said, in v. 22, *if thou canst do any thing.* Jesus thus intimated to him, that there was no deficiency of power in himself, and that the blessing would be bestowed, if he would place confidence in that power. If there was any difficulty in the case

thou canst believe, all things *are* possible to him that believeth.

24 And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said, with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.

25 When Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, *Thou* dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more into him.

26 And *the spirit* cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him: and he was as one dead; insomuch that many said, He is dead.

27 But Jesus took him by the hand, and lifted him up; and he arose.

28 And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him privately, Why could not we cast him out?

29 And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting.

30 And they departed thence, and passed through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know *it*.

31 For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.

32 But they understood not that saying, and were afraid to ask him.

33 And he came to Capernaum, and being in the house, he asked them, What was it that ye disputed among yourselves by the way?

34 But they held their peace: for by the way they had disputed among themselves, who *should be* the greatest.

35 And he sat down, and called the twelve, and saith unto them, If any man desire to be first, *the same* shall be last of all, and servant of all.

36 And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them,

37 Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.

38 And John answered him, saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him, because he followeth not us.

39 But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which

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it would be found to exist not in Jesus, but in the man himself. 24. *Help thou mine unbelief;* help me, though I am conscious that my faith is weak; I have confidence in no one else but thee, and though I might justly be required to have more faith, yet, O, pity my distressed situation, and let not my lack of faith prevent the exercise of thy power. 26. *Rent him sore;* probably, threw him into severe convulsions. Compare 1: 26.

30—32. Compare Matt. 17: 22, 23.

33—48. Compare Matt. 18: 1—9

35. *The same shall be last of all.* Rather, the same *should be*, or, *let him be*, last of all. According to the Messiah's religion, humility is true greatness; your preëminence ought to consist, not in outward honors, but in

shall do a miracle in my name, that can lightly speak evil of me.

40 For he that is not against us, is on our part.

41 For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, He shall not lose his reward.

42 And whosoever shall offend one of *these* little ones that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.

43 And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

44 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

45 And if thy foot offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched:

46 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

47 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire:

48 Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

49 For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

humility and in usefulness. 39. *Lightly;* for a slight cause, easily. 43. *Into hell;* the place of future punishment; the word being here contrasted with *going into life*, that is, *future bliss*. For a similar contrast, see Matt. 25: 46. ‖ *Fire*. See on Matt. 25: 41. 44. *Where their worm*, &c. This language is figurative, expressing extreme distress and anguish, which shall have no end. It seems to have been adopted from Is. 66: 24, where the doom of transgressors is described. Compare also Matt. 5: 22. The constant fire which was kept burning in the awful valley of Tophet came to be regarded as a fit emblem of the ever-enduring misery of lost souls. The idea of the Saviour, in vs. 43—48, is, that it would be better to endure any inconvenience, or calamity, on earth, however great, than to be at last consigned to remediless woe.

49. *For every one shall be salted with fire*. The word *fire* here, having the same meaning as in the connected verses, represents the punishment of the wicked in the future state. ‖ *Every one;* that is, of those who shall be "cast into hell-fire." ‖ *Salted with fire*. As salt is spread over the substance to which it is applied, and is intended to affect all parts of it, so, in respect to the punishments of a future world, the wicked will be, as it were, covered with torment. Compare with this language the expression "He shall baptize [the impenitent] with fire," in Matt. 3: 11. ‖ *And every sacrifice*. The conjunction rendered *and* has sometimes, in conformity to the use of the Hebrew language, the signification *as*, *even as*. So in the present instance, *Just as every sacrifice is required to be salted*, &c. The animal sacrifices were required, in the Old Testament, to be seasoned with salt. See Lev. 2: 13. ‖ *Shall be salted*. The future tense is here employed as expressing what we should express by saying *should be*, or *ought to be*. See on v. 35.

Remark. The very solemn language of our Lord, in this verse and the preceding ones, cannot be reconciled with any low and slight views of the future punishment of the

50 Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

CHAPTER X.

AND he arose from thence, and cometh into the coasts of Judea, by the farther side of Jordan: and the people resort unto him again; and, as he was wont, he taught them again.

2 And the Pharisees came to him, and asked him, Is it lawful for a man to put away *his* wife? tempting him.

3 And he answered and said unto them, What did Moses command you?

4 And they said, Moses suffered to write a bill of divorcement, and to put *her* away.

5 And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart, he wrote you this precept:

6 But from the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female.

7 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife;

8 And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh.

9 What, therefore, God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

10 And in the house his disciples asked him again of the same *matter*.

11 And he saith unto them, Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her.

12 And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

13 And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and *his* disciples rebuked those that brought *them*.

14 But when Jesus saw *it*, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

15 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein.

16 And he took them up in

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wicked. Who could, in accordance with this language, believe that the wicked will be annihilated? Who could think of their punishment as intended to have an end?

50. *Salt is good.* The Saviour proceeded to use the word *salt* with a different meaning, as suggesting, on account of its preserving quality, a salutary caution for his disciples. Compare Matt. 5: 13. In this closing remark, it is employed to express true wisdom or piety. ‖ *Have salt in yourselves;* cherish true piety; it will make you acceptable to God, and useful to men. ‖ *Have peace one with another.* A caution, required by the subject on which the disciples had been conversing. See vs. 33, 34. An ambitious, self-elevating spirit is opposite to the spirit of peace. The cherishing of mutual peace best counteracts the spirit of ambition.

CHAPTER X.

1—31. Compare Matt. 19: 1—30.

his arms, put *his* hands upon them, and blessed them.

17 And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is* none good, but one, *that is* God.

19 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honor thy father and mother.

20 And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

21 Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

22 And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

23 And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24 And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27 And Jesus, looking upon them, saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

28 Then Peter began to say unto him, Lo, we have left all, and have followed thee.

29 And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's,

30 But he shall receive a hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come, eternal life:

31 But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last first.

32 And they were in the way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus went before them: and they were

19. *Defraud not.* In the ten commandments, as originally given (Ex. 20: 3—17), these very words do not occur. But the Jews were in the habit, when referring to the decalogue, to quote the commands not always in their original order, or in the precise words of Moses, but often in other equivalent terms. Our Lord may here be considered as referring to the tenth commandment (Ex. 20: 17), or as expressing a general prohibition of doing wrong to our fellow-men.

32—45. Compare Matt. 20: 17—

amazed; and as they followed, they were afraid. And he took again the twelve, and began to tell them what things should happen unto him,

33 *Saying*, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be delivered unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles;

34 And they shall mock him, and shall scourge him, and shall spit upon him, and shall kill him: and the third day he shall rise again.

35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.

36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?

37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized;

40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand, is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared.

41 And when the ten heard *it*, they began to be much displeased with James and John.

42 But Jesus called them *to him*, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles, exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them.

43 But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister;

44 And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.

45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

46 And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway side begging.

47 And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

48 And many charged him that he should hold his peace; but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

49 And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called:

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28. 42. *They which are accounted to rule.* An expression, meaning, simply, *they that rule.*

46—52. Compare Matt. 20: 29—

and they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee.

50 And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus.

51 And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight.

52 And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way.

CHAPTER XI.

AND when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,

2 And saith unto them, Go your way, into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring *him*.

3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him*; and straightway he will send him hither.

4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without, in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5 And certain of them that stood there, said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded; and they let them go.

7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him, and he sat upon him.

8 And many spread their garments in the way, and others cut down branches off the trees, and strewed *them* in the way.

9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

10 Blessed *be* the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the even-tide was come, he went out unto Bethany, with the twelve.

12 And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry.

13 And seeing a fig-tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to

34. 52. *Thy faith hath made thee whole.* It was the confidence which the blind man cherished in the ability and benevolence of Jesus, that induced him to seek aid from Jesus, and that induced him to persevere, while the crowd sought to restrain him. Such confidence Jesus delighted to acknowledge and to honor. Compare 9 : 23.

CHAPTER XI.

1—11. Compare Matt. 21 : 1—17.

12—14. Compare Matt. 21 : 18, 19. *The time of figs;* that is, the time for

it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not *yet*.

14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee, hereafter, forever. And his disciples heard *it*.

15 And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves:

16 And would not suffer that any man should carry *any* vessel through the temple.

17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations, the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

20 And, in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig-tree dried up from the roots

21 And Peter, calling to remembrance, saith unto him, Master, behold the fig-tree which thou cursedst, is withered away.

22 And Jesus, answering, saith unto them, Have faith in God.

23 For verily, I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

24 Therefore, I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*.

25 And when ye stand, praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any, that your Father, also, which is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses.

26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father, which is in heaven, forgive your trespasses.

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plucking and gathering them. The tree had leaves; and as fig-trees show the fruit *before* the leaves, fruit might have been expected on it, especially as the time for gathering figs had not come. If, then, no figs were on it, it would justly be regarded as a barren tree. Some scattering figs were occasionally found on the early fig-trees, the remnants of the preceding year's growth. But on this tree there was no fruit at all. Jesus condemned the useless tree to speedy decay; not as an act of personal indignation, but to impress on his disciples a useful moral lesson. In addition to the sentiment respecting the efficacy of faith in God, enforced the next day, on being told that the fig-tree was dried up (see vs. 21—23), how apt an emblem would the tree be regarded of an unprofitable follower of the Messiah!

15—19. Compare Matt. 21: 12, 13. 18. *At his doctrine;* his teaching, both the matter and the manner.

20—24. Compare Matt. 21: 20—22.

25, 26. See Matt. 6: 14, 15. 18: 21—35. How carefully did our Lord enforce the exercise of a forgiving spirit!

27 And they come again to Jerusalem; and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

28 And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

30 The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me.

31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven, he will say, Why, then, did ye not believe him?

32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all *men* counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

33 And they answered, and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus, answering, saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

CHAPTER XII.

AND he began to speak unto them by parables. A *certain* man planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about *it*, and digged *a place for* the wine-fat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

2 And, at the season, he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen the fruit of the vineyard.

3 And they caught *him*, and beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

4 And again, he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled.

5 And again, he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.

6 Having yet, therefore, one son, his well-beloved, he sent him, also, last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

7 But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8 And they took him, and killed *him*, and cast *him* out of the vineyard.

9 What shall, therefore, the lord of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

10 And have ye not read this scripture, The stone, which the builders rejected, is become the head of the corner?

11 This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

12 And they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people; for they knew that he had

27—33. Compare Matt. 21: 23—27.

CHAPTER XII.
1—12. Compare Matt. 21: 33—45.

spoken the parable against them; and they left him, and went their way.

13 And they send unto him certain of the Pharisees and of the Herodians, to catch him in *his* words.

14 And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man; for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth. Is it lawful to give tribute to Cesar, or not?

15 Shall we give, or shall we not give? But he, knowing their hypocrisy, said unto them, Why tempt ye me? bring me a penny, that I may see *it*.

16 And they brought *it*. And he saith unto them, Whose *is* this image and superscription? And they said unto him, Cesar's.

17 And Jesus, answering, said unto them, Render to Cesar the things that are Cesar's, and to God the things that are God's. And they marvelled at him.

18 Then came unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying,

19 Master, Moses wrote unto us, If a man's brother die, and leave *his* wife *behind him*, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

20 Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying, left no seed.

21 And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third, likewise.

22 And the séven had her, and left no seed: last of all, the woman died also.

23 In the resurrection, therefore, when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? for the seven had her to wife.

24 And Jesus, answering, said unto them, Do ye not, therefore, err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?

25 For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels, which are in heaven.

26 And, as touching the dead, that they rise, have ye not read in the book of Moses, how, in the bush, God spake unto him, saying, I *am* the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?

27 He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living; ye, therefore, do greatly err.

28 And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that he had answered them well, asked him, Which is the first commandment of all?

29 And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This *is* the first commandment.

31 And the second *is* like, *namely*, this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

32 And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth: for there is one God; and there is none other but he:

33 And to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbor as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.

34 And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, he said unto him, Thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man, after that, durst ask him *any question*.

35 And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David?

36 For David, himself, said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

37 David, therefore, himself, calleth him Lord; and whence is he *then* his son? And the common people heard him gladly.

38 And he said unto them, in his doctrine, Beware of the scribes, which love to go in long clothing, and *love* salutations in the market-places,

39 And the chief seats in the synagogues, and the uppermost rooms at feasts:

40 Which devour widows' houses, and, for a pretence, make long prayers: these shall receive greater damnation.

41 And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury; and many, that were rich, cast in much.

42 And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing.

43 And he called unto *him* his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast more in than all they which have cast into the treasury:

44 For all *they* did cast in of their abundance; but she, of her want, did cast in all that she had, *even* all her living.

13—37. Compare Matt. 22: 15—46.

38—40. *In his doctrine;* his teaching. ‖ *Long clothing;* literally, *robes;* a long, flowing garment, worn by persons of distinction, and attracting the notice of the people by the venerable appearance which it imparted. See Luke 20: 46. Compare Matt. 23: 5, 6, 14.

41. *The treasury.* This name was given to thirteen chests, which were kept in a court of the temple called *the court of the women.* In these chests were deposited the offerings of the Jews, both the annual and the other offerings, for the support of the temple service.

42. *Two mites;* the smallest Jewish coin. ‖ *A farthing.* The original word means a Jewish coin, equal to about a half of our cent.

43. *Hath cast more in*, &c.; that is, comparatively, as is explained in the next verse. Our omniscient Judge will not disregard the principle stated in 2 Cor. 8: 12.

CHAPTER XIII.

AND as he went out of the temple, one of his disciples saith unto him, Master, see what manner of stones, and what buildings *are here!*

2 And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Seest thou these great buildings? there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, over against the temple, Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, asked him, privately,

4 Tell us, when shall these things be? and what *shall* be the sign, when all these things shall be fulfilled?

5 And Jesus, answering them, began to say, Take heed lest any *man* deceive you:

6 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ;* and shall deceive many.

7 And when ye shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled; for *such things* must needs be; but the end *shall* not *be* yet.

8 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and there shall be earthquakes in *divers* places, and there shall be famines and troubles: these *are* the beginnings of sorrows.

9 But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake for a testimony against them.

10 And the gospel must first be published among all nations.

11 But when they shall lead *you* and deliver you up, take no thought, beforehand, what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.

12 Now the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the son; and children shall rise up against *their* parents, and shall cause them to be put to death.

13 And ye shall be hated of all *men*, for my name's sake: but he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

14 But when ye shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth understand,) then let them that be in Judea, flee to the mountains.

15 And let him that is on the house-top not go down into the house, neither enter *therein*, to take any thing out of his house:

16 And let him that is in the field not turn back again to take up his garment.

17 But woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!

18 And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter.

CHAPTER XIII.

1—37. This chapter should be compared with the 24th chapter of Matthew.

19 For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created, unto this time, neither shall be.

20 And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.

21 And then, if any man shall say to you, Lo, here *is* Christ; or, lo, *he is* there; believe *him* not.

22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall show signs and wonders, to seduce, if *it were* possible, even the elect.

23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.

24 But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light,

25 And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken.

26 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds, with great power and glory.

27 And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather together his elect, from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven.

28 Now learn a parable of the fig-tree: When her branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is near.

29 So ye, in like manner, when ye shall see these things come to pass, know that it is nigh, *even* at the doors.

30 Verily, I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass till all these things be done.

31 Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away.

32 But of that day and *that* hour, knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.

33 Take ye heed, watch and pray; for ye know not when the time is.

34 *For the Son of man is* as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

35 Watch ye, therefore; for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning:

36 Lest, coming suddenly, he find you sleeping.

37 And, what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch.

CHAPTER XIV.

AFTER two days was *the feast of* the passover, and of

35. *At even, or at midnight*, &c. These were names given to the four watches into which the night was divided among the Jews, in the time of our Saviour. The night was divided into four periods, of three hours each; the evening watch, from twilight to nine o'clock; the midnight, from nine to twelve; the cock-crowing, from twelve to three; the morning, from three to day-break.

CHAPTER XIV.

1—11. Compare Matt. 26: 1—16.

unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put *him* to death.

2 But they said, Not on the feast-*day*, lest there be an uproar of the people.

3 And being in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman, having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious; and she brake the box, and poured *it* on his head.

4 And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made?

5 For it might have been sold for more than three hundred pence, and have been given to the poor. And they murmured against her.

6 And Jesus said, Let her alone; why trouble ye her? she hath wrought a good work on me.

7 For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good; but me ye have not always.

8 She hath done what she could: she is come aforehand, to anoint my body to the burying.

9 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached, throughout the whole world, *this* also that she hath done, shall be spoken of for a memorial of her.

10 And Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went unto the chief priests to betray him unto them.

11 And when they heard *it*, they were glad, and promised to give him money. And he sought how he might conveniently betray him.

12 And the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

13 And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14 And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the good man of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

15 And he will show you a large upper room, furnished *and* prepared: there make ready for us.

16 And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

17 And in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

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8. *She hath done what she could;* she has testified her gratitude and respect towards me, according to the best of her ability, in my present circumstances.

12—16. Compare Matt. 26: 17—

19. 15. *A large upper room.* The Jewish houses were furnished with such a room, for conversation with friends, for prayer, and for meditation. Meals were also taken in them.

17—50. Compare Matt. 26: 20—56.

18 And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, one of you which eateth with me, shall betray me.

19 And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him, one by one, *Is* it I? and another *said*, *Is* it I?

20 And he answered and said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve that dippeth with me in the dish.

21 The Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed; good were it for that man, if he had never been born

22 And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

23 And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it.

24 And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.

25 Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

26 And when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

27 And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.

28 But after that I am risen, I will go before you into Galilee.

29 But Peter said unto him, Although all shall be offended, yet *will* not I.

30 And Jesus saith unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this day, *even* in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice.

31 But he spake the more vehemently, If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise, also, said they all.

32 And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here while I shall pray.

33 And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

34 And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

35 And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

36 And he said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee: take away this cup from me: nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt.

37 And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour?

38 Watch ye, and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly is ready, but the flesh is weak.

39 And again he went away and prayed, and spake the same words.

40 And when he returned, he found them asleep again; for their eyes were heavy; neither wist they what to answer him.

41 And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough; the hour is come: behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42 Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

43 And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude, with swords and staves, from the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders.

44 And he that betrayed him had given them a token, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he; take him, and lead *him* away safely.

45 And as soon as he was come, he goeth straightway to him, and saith, Master, Master; and kissed him.

46 And they laid their hands on him, and took him.

47 And one of them that stood by, drew a sword, and smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear.

48 And Jesus answered, and said unto them, Are ye come out, as against a thief, *with* swords and *with* staves, to take me?

49 I was daily with you, in the temple, teaching, and ye took me not: but the Scriptures must be fulfilled.

50 And they all forsook him, and fled.

51 And there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about *his* naked *body;* and the young men laid hold on him,

52 And he left the linen cloth, and fled from them, naked.

53 And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests, and the elders, and the scribes.

54 And Peter followed him, afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants and warmed himself at the fire.

55 And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus, to put him to death; and found none:

56 For many bare false witness against him; but their witness agreed not together.

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51. *A linen cloth;* an article of dress which was used at night, and also in summer, as a substitute for the ordinary mantle, or outside garment. ‖ *His naked body.* The word *naked* may here express, as it does in other places (see Is. 20: 2, 3. John 21: 7), that the young man was almost naked. Being aroused by the tumult, he did not wait to dress himself in the ordinary manner, but merely threw this linen cloth over what dress he had on. ‖ *The young men;* those belonging to the multitude.

52. *He left the linen cloth.* This he could easily do, as it was worn by merely throwing it around his body. The multitude might have thought that he was one of the Saviour's intimate friends.

53—72. Compare Matt. 26: 57—75.

57 And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58 We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59 But neither so did their witness agree together.

60 And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?

61 But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again, the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62 And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63 Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

64 Ye have heard the blasphemy: What think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

65 And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66 And as Peter was beneath, in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest;

67 And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68 But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I, what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch; and the cock crew.

69 And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them.

70 And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them; for thou art a Galilean, and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

71 But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72 And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.

CHAPTER XV.

AND straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered him to Pilate.

2 And Pilate asked him, Art thou the king of the Jews? And he, answering, said unto him, Thou sayest *it*.

3 And the chief priests accused him of many things: but he answered nothing.

4 And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing?

behold how many things they witness against thee!

5 But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

6 Now at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7 And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8 And the multitude, crying aloud, began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them.

9 But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the king of the Jews?

10 (For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.)

11 But the chief priests moved the people that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12 And Pilate answered, and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the king of the Jews?

13 And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14 Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15 And *so* Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged *him*, to be crucified.

16 And the soldiers led him away into the hall, called Pretorium; and they call together the whole band;

17 And they clothed him with purple, and platted a crown of thorns, and put it about his *head;*

18 And began to salute him, Hail! king of the Jews.

19 And they smote him on the head with a reed, and did spit upon him, and bowing *their* knees, worshipped him.

20 And when they had mocked him, they took off the purple from him, and put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him.

21 And they compel one Simon, a Cyrenian, who passed by, coming out of the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to bear his cross.

22 And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

23 And they gave him to drink, wine mingled with myrrh: but he received *it* not.

24 And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

25 And it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

26 And the superscription of his accusation was written over, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

CHAPTER XV.

1—47. Compare Matt. 27: 1, 2, 12—61.

16. *Pretorium.* This is, in the original, the same word that is translated, in Matt. 27: 27, *the common hall.* See on that verse.

25. *The third hour.* Nine o'clock in the morning. See on Matt. 27: 45.

27 And with him they crucify two thieves, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors.

29 And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest *it* in three days,

30 Save thyself, and come down from the cross!

31 Likewise also the chief priests, mocking, said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32 Let Christ, the king of Israel, descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reviled him.

33 And when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land, until the ninth hour.

34 And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

35 And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

36 And one ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

37 And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

38 And the vail of the temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom.

39 And when the centurion, which stood over against him, saw that he so cried out, and gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God.

40 There were also women looking on afar off, among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less, and of Joses, and Salome;

41 Who also, when he was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto him; and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem.

42 And now when the even was come, (because it was the preparation, that is, the day before the Sabbath,)

43 Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus.

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28. *He was numbered with the transgressors.* See Is. 53: 12.

32. *Let Christ, the king of Israel;* let the Messiah, the king, &c.; words uttered in derision.

34. *Eloi, Eloi;* words of the same import as those mentioned in Matt. 27: 46, and used indiscriminately with them.

40. *James the less.* See on Matt. 10: 2.

44 And Pilate marvelled if he were already dead: and calling *unto him* the centurion, he asked him whether he had been any while dead.

45 And when he knew *it* of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph.

46 And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.

47 And Mary Magdalene, and Mary, *the mother* of Joses, beheld where he was laid.

CHAPTER XVI.

AND when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the *mother* of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

2 And very early in the morning, the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre, at the rising of the sun.

3 And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

5 And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment, and they were affrighted.

6 And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted. Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here; behold the place where they laid him.

7 But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter, that he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

8 And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre: for they trembled, and were amazed: neither said they any thing to any *man*, for they were afraid.

9 Now when *Jesus* was risen, early, the first *day* of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, (out of whom he had cast seven devils;)

10 *And* she went and told them that had been with him, as they mourned and wept.

11 And they, when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, believed not.

12 After that, he appeared in

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46. *The door;* the entrance. See on Matt. 27: 60.

CHAPTER XVI.

1—8. Compare Matt. 28: 1, 5—8.

7. *Tell his disciples and Peter.* It was suitable that Peter should be particularly informed of the Lord's resurrection, on account of the overwhelming grief which he had endured for denying his master.

9. *First to Mary Magdalene.* Compare John 20: 11—17. ‖ *Seven devils.* See Luke 8: 2.

12, 13. *He appeared in another form unto two of them.* Compare Luke 24:

another form unto two of them, as they walked and went into the country.

13 And they went and told it unto the residue: neither believed they them.

14 Afterward, he appeared unto the eleven, as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.

15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature:

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

17 And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

19 So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.

13—35. It is not easy to determine what is meant by *another form*. Reference may be made to some change in his dress, or in his countenance, or in both. It is clear, from Luke 24: 16, that these two persons did not, at first, know him.

14. Compare Luke 24: 36—49. John 20: 19—21. *Hardness of heart;* unreasonable persisting to discredit the testimony which had been given them.

15, 16. *Go ye, &c.* The commission thus given to the apostles, is substantially the same as that stated in Matt. 28: 19. It is altogether probable, that on more occasions than one, and in various forms of expression, Jesus specially enjoined on his apostles their official duty.

17, 18. *These signs;* miracles. ‖ *Them that believe.* It is by no means necessary to understand this language as relating to every individual believer. If among the company of the followers of Jesus there were those who were empowered to work miracles, the promise was fulfilled. The Saviour's followers would be distinguished, by that circumstance, from every other community. Perhaps, too, our Saviour had special reference to the unbelief which some of the disciples had shown respecting his having risen from the dead, and which they had frequently shown before. He might have wished to enforce on them, with special care, the duty and the consequences of *firmly believing*, of placing implicit reliance on him; he would greatly honor the spirit of hearty, unwavering confidence in him. This promise had respect to the times during which it pleased the Lord to work miracles in attestation of the gospel. In our times, it would be presumption to expect such manifestations of divine power.

19. *After the Lord had spoken unto them.* In Acts 1: 3, we are informed that the Lord spent forty days on earth, before his ascension, instructing the apostles in the things pertaining to the new dispensation. It was also just as he had pronounced a blessing on them, that "he was parted from them and carried up into heaven." See Luke 24: 51. Compare, also, Acts 1: 9. ‖ *Sat on the right hand of God.* This expression denotes admission to the favor of God, and participation in his

20 And they went forth and preached every where; the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

honors and government. Compare Ps. 110 : 1. Matt. 20 : 21. See, also, Rev. 3 : 21; likewise, Eph. 1 : 20—23.

20. *They went forth*, &c. The book of the Acts of the Apostles furnishes the illustration of this verse.

END OF VOLUME I.

THE

FOUR GOSPELS;

WITH

NOTES,

CHIEFLY EXPLANATORY;

DESIGNED FOR TEACHERS IN

SABBATH SCHOOLS AND BIBLE CLASSES,

AND AS

AN AID TO FAMILY INSTRUCTION.

BY HENRY J. RIPLEY,

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IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CONTENTS.

PREFACE

TO THE

GOSPEL OF LUKE.

FROM the earliest Christian antiquity, Luke has been acknowledged as the author of this Gospel. It would seem, from the verses with which he introduces his history (1: 1–4), that there were in existence many accounts respecting the life and death of Jesus Christ, which accounts were probably not of so authentic a character as to deserve entire confidence. Allusion could not here have been made by Luke to the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, since Matthew was an eye-witness of the events which he relates, and Mark was so connected with the first Christians and with the Apostles, particularly with Peter, as to secure for his narrative a universal reception. It was natural, however, that there should be an eager curiosity to read any book professing to relate events of so uncommon a character, and of so deep an interest, as the events pertaining to the new religion. Hence many would undertake to write without possessing sufficient knowledge or discrimination: they might publish accounts which would be materially defective, and contain statements either untrue or improperly represented. This might have been done, however, without any ill design on the part of the writers.

Still the multiplication of such accounts would have an unhappy effect on many minds; and we can easily conceive that a Christian, who had an ability for writing, who could have access to the proper

sources of information, and who had a spirit of investigation and discrimination, should wish to counteract such an effect; particularly if any very estimable friend, whose spiritual interests lay near his heart, would be specially benefited by his preparing an account, and if the whole Christian community besides would receive advantage. For, granting that the Gospels of Matthew and Mark were both in existence, there was still room for another authentic Gospel, as the followers of Christ, and those who would be glad to possess such a document, were spread over extensive regions, and the slow process of hand-writing could not multiply copies so fast as they might be needed. It was then desirable that an account should be prepared that might help to supersede those defective ones, and be relied on as entirely authentic.

Theophilus was a person who had been instructed in the Christian religion, and a particular friend of Luke's. For his special benefit Luke wrote, in order that he might possess a narrative drawn from the proper sources, and conveying information which could be relied on. He was in all probability a Gentile, living at a distance from Palestine. Hence Luke is careful to give such information respecting places as would not be needed by one who was intimately acquainted with the country. For instance, he gives the information that Nazareth and Capernaum were cities in Galilee (1: 26. 4: 31), and that Arimathea was a city of the Jews (23: 51).

The information respecting Luke himself is brief. The apostle Paul speaks of him in very affectionate and honorable terms, as a fellow-laborer (Philemon, v. 24; see also 2 Tim. 4: 11), and as "the beloved physician" (Col. 4: 14). It appears, too, from the Acts of the Apostles (of which book Luke was also the author, see 1: 1), that Luke was for a considerable time a companion of Paul. See Acts 16: 10—13. 20: 6, 13—15. 21: 1—18. 27: 1, &c. 28: 2. In all these passages, the language is such as shows that the writer was one of the company. This intimate connection of Luke with Paul, as well as his having

traced the accounts back to *apostolical* and other indubitable testimony, secures for his Gospel the credit of apostolical authority.

Whether Luke was a Jew or a Gentile, is a question that has been variously answered. The preface to his Gospel, contained in the first four verses, exhibits a style and manner of Greek writing, different from that of the other evangelists, and has been regarded as evidence that he was a Gentile of considerable education. Again, in the Epistle to the Colossians (4: 7, &c.), Paul makes mention of several persons, naming *them* particularly as being "of the circumcision," that is, as being Jews. Immediately after, he mentions others, and among them Luke. It has hence been argued, that Luke did not belong to "the circumcision." On the other hand, it has been said that there was no need of mentioning Luke as a Jew, because he was probably well known to the Colossian church. And as to his manner of writing, it is manifest that his Gospel throughout exhibits the same qualities of style which characterize the other Gospels. He also shows a most intimate knowledge of Jewish customs, such even as a native Jew of intelligence might be supposed to possess. Hence it has been concluded that he was by birth a Jew. On account of these various circumstances, some have believed that he was by birth a Gentile, that in early life he became a proselyte to Judaism, and afterwards became a Christian. It has also been suggested that, like the case of Timothy (Acts 16: 1, 3), perhaps his father was a Greek, and his mother a Jewess.

As to the place where this Gospel was written, nothing satisfactory can be said. The time when it was written was probably about the year 60.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

CHAPTER I.

FORASMUCH as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us,

2 Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word;

3 It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus,

4 That thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed.

5 THERE was in the days of Herod the king of Judea, a certain priest named

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CHAPTER I.

1. *Many.* See the first paragraph of the preface to this Gospel. ‖ *To set forth in order;* to arrange. ‖ *A declaration;* an account. ‖ *Among us;* among Christians, with whom Luke ranked himself.

2. *Even as they delivered them to us.* These words show the source whence *the belief of Christians* was drawn. They do not relate to the narratives which "many" persons had prepared, but to the belief which existed among Christians. This belief had respect to facts, which had been delivered by eye-witnesses. ‖ *The word;* the word of God, or, the gospel. These "ministers of the word" were men who had been personally engaged in the transactions, and who had been employed in spreading abroad a knowledge of the events. They therefore 'knew whereof they affirmed.'

3. *Having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first.* He had, with great care, traced all the accounts to the very beginning; so that he was well qualified to write a narrative. ‖ *To write unto thee in order;* to write an orderly, connected narrative. ‖ *Most excellent Theophilus.* Theophilus was a friend of Luke's, and probably a Gentile, living out of Palestine. The term *most excellent* is merely the language of respect and affection; it does not necessarily show that Theophilus was occupying any official station. In Acts 1: 1, no such term is employed.

The first four verses of this chapter are the preface, by which Luke introduced his Gospel to the favorable notice of Theophilus. It would seem that many accounts had been published of the events pertaining to Jesus Christ, which were not sufficiently extensive or accurate, or which were not entirely free from error. From these, and from current report, perhaps, too, from other sources, Theophilus might have derived his information. Luke wished to furnish his friend with an account that might supersede the defective and inaccurate narratives which many had published. For this purpose he made thorough investigation, tracing the events to the beginning, and drawing his information from the most authentic sources.

5. *Herod the king of Judea.* See on Matt. 2: 1. ‖ *Of the course of*

Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife *was* of the daughters of Aaron, and her name *was* Elisabeth.

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

7 And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren; and they both were *now* well stricken in years.

8 And it came to pass, that, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,

9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without, at the time of incense.

11 And there appeared unto

Abia. The Jewish priests had become so numerous in the time of David, that he divided them into twenty-four classes, over each of which was placed 'a chief man,' or ruler. Each class officiated in the temple a week at a time. Of these classes, the eighth was that of Abijah, or, as his name was expressed in the Greek language, Abia. See 1 Chron. 24: 10. 2 Chron. 8: 14. 31: 2. The word *course*, in this connection, is equivalent to the word *class*. This division into classes was continued after the return from the captivity, though the number of classes did not continue unbroken. See Ezra 2: 36—39. Neh. 7: 39—42. ‖ *Of the daughters of Aaron.* Both Zacharias and his wife could trace their descent to Aaron. Thus they both belonged to the family of priests. Aaron and his sons had been set apart by divine appointment as the priests, and to his descendants the priesthood belonged. See Ex. 28: 1. 40: 12—15.

6. *Before God;* in the sight of God, eminently pious.

7. *Stricken;* advanced.

8. *Before God.* The temple was regarded as the house of God. Those who were performing service in the temple, or at the altar, were consequently said to be *before*, or *in the presence of*, God. ‖ *In the order of his course;* when it came, in the rotation of the classes, to be the turn of his class to perform the temple-service.

9. *His lot was to burn incense.* Not only were the priests divided into classes, but the services of the temple were distributed among the priests of the officiating class, to each one a particular service being assigned. ‖ *Into the temple.* Reference is here had to that part of the temple in which the altar of incense was placed. The tabernacle, as constructed in the time of Moses, was divided into two apartments, the first of which was called *the holy place*, in which was the altar of incense. Compare Ex. 26: 33. 30: 1, 6. The second apartment was called *the most holy place.* See Ex. 26: 33, 34. The temple built by Solomon was furnished with similar apartments; so, too, was the temple which was built after the return of the Jews from their captivity in Babylon. The temple in the time of Christ was on the same plan. It was into the apartment called *the holy place*, or *the sanctuary*, that Zacharias had gone.

10. *Without;* outside of the apartment into which Zacharias had gone. There were *courts*, or enclosed places, in connection with various parts of the temple, which could accommodate numbers of people. ‖ *At the hour of incense;* the time of burning incense. The morning and the evening were the appointed times. See Ex. 30: 7, 8. As many people were collected together, it was probably the evening which is here spoken of.

11. *The right side.* The right side was anciently regarded as a position indicative of favor, or prosperity.

him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear *fell* upon him.

13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.

14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth.

15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.

16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.

17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of

See Matt. 25: 33. In accordance with this feeling, the angel appeared on the right side of the altar.

13. *John.* A very appropriate name for the promised son. Traced to its Hebrew origin, it means *Jehovah is gracious.*

15. *Strong drink.* Like the Nazarites (see Num. 6: 2, 3), John was to be distinguished from other men in regard to his manner of living. He was to be abstemious as to many ordinary indulgences, and to be peculiarly devoted to God. ‖ *Filled with the Holy Ghost;* eminently under a divine influence from his very birth.

16. *Shall he turn to the Lord.* The object for which John was to come, was a true reformation of the Jews. In many instances, this object would be accomplished. The Jews were in a very corrupt state; and a turning to the Lord was greatly needed.

17. *Before him.* The word *him* is by some regarded as referring emphatically to the Messiah, as John was to announce the Messiah, and to be his forerunner. There is no difficulty, however, in referring it to the words *the Lord their God*, which immediately precede. The expression, *to go before him*, may be equivalent to the expression, *to serve him;* and John was, in a distinguished sense, to be a servant of God. The times, also, of the Messiah, which John was to introduce, would be eminently the times in which the Lord God would manifest his presence among his people. ‖ *In the spirit and power of Elias;* possessing a character, a spirit, powerful and energetic, like that of the prophet Elijah. Elijah discharged his office in a time of general wickedness, and he steadily protested against the prevailing impiety. Between Elijah's mode of life and that of John, there was also similarity. See 1 Kings, chapters 17—19. 2 Kings, chapters 1, 2. Compare Matt. 11: 14. ‖ *To turn the hearts, &c.* This expression was quoted from Malachi, 4: 6. The prophet Malachi had foretold that a prophet was to arise, whom he called Elijah, and whose design would be, to effect among the people a general turning to the Lord, as a preparation for the Messiah's coming. At the time of John's birth, the state of the nation was exceedingly corrupt; both parents and children needed to be reclaimed from error and sin; both in the domestic relations, and in reference to God, a new state of feeling and a new course of conduct were required. ‖ *To the wisdom of the just;* to the wise, holy disposition and conduct of the righteous. ‖ *To make ready a people prepared for the Lord.* Another and somewhat stronger method of expressing preparation for the coming Messiah. John was to be the last in the series of divinely-appointed teachers before the Messiah; and, without another divinely-appointed messenger, the Messiah himself was shortly to appear. There was among the Jews a sort of

Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.

19 And the angel, answering, said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings.

20 And behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marvelled that he tarried so long in the temple.

22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.

23 And it came to pass, that as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.

24 And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself five months, saying,

25 Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on *me*, to take away my reproach among men.

26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,

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preparation for the Messiah, as the nation had long been expecting his coming. But they were not in a state of moral fitness for him. There were, however, in the nation, those who would reverently and obediently hearken to a well-attested announcement of the Messiah's approach, and to the exhortation to become prepared, by timely repentance, for his teaching and government. *The Lord* seems most naturally to refer here to the Messiah, the expected King and Lord, or Master, of the Jews.

Thus the official duty of John the Baptist, as the harbinger of the Messiah, was distinctly announced to Zacharias. But it may be asked, Was the design accomplished for which John was sent? To this it may be replied, that, in many instances, there was effected a turning to the Lord, and consequently a preparation for the Messiah. But by far the larger part of the nation, and especially the distinguished men, failed to receive spiritual benefit from John's labors. See Matt. 11: 18. 21: 32. Luke, 7: 29, 30. And therefore, according to the prediction of Malachi (4: 6), the land was smitten with the curse of God.

19. *Gabriel*. Compare Dan. 8: 16. 9: 21. This name is compounded of two Hebrew words which signify *man of God*. ‖ *That stand in the presence of God*. God was conceived of as a mighty king, having around him servants whom he employed in executing his will. *To stand in his presence*, then, would mean *to be his servant*.

23. *The days of his ministration were accomplished*. See on v. 5.

24. *Hid herself*; kept herself in comparative retirement.

25. *He looked on me*; he looked kindly towards me, and mercifully regarded me. ‖ *To take away my reproach*. To be without children was considered, among the Jews, a peculiarly unhappy circumstance.

26. *Nazareth*. See on Matt. 2: 23.

27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name *was* Mary.

28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, *thou that art* highly favored; the Lord *is* with thee: blessed *art* thou among women.

29 And when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be.

30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God.

31 And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.

32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall

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28. *The Lord is with thee;* or, the Lord be with thee; that is, the Lord be favorable to thee. This was one of the forms of salutation among the Hebrews. Compare Judges 6: 12. Ruth 2: 4.

31. *Jesus.* See on Matt. 1: 21.

32. *Give unto him the throne of his father David.* The son of Mary would be a lineal descendant of David, and would be the king of the Jews, the long-expected Messiah. See on Matt. 1: 1.

33. *The house of Jacob.* Jacob, or Israel, was the father of the twelve patriarchs, the progenitors of the Jewish nation. Thus the whole nation might be designated as the house, or family, of Jacob. Since the family of Jacob, or the Jewish nation, had been set apart as the people of God, the two phrases *house of Jacob* and *people of God* came to be of the same signification; and even when the people of God, strictly speaking, that is, *the truly pious*, were meant, the phrase *house of Jacob* would naturally be employed. In this verse, the true people of God, owning subjection to the Messiah, are meant, of whom the house of Jacob was an emblem. The Jews supposed that their nation would be perpetuated, and that the blessings of the Messiah's reign would be communicated to other nations, by their becoming attached to the Jewish nation and owning the sway of the Messiah, the king of the Jews; so that, with them, *the people of the Messiah* and *the Jews* were synonymous terms. But the Messiah's object was a spiritual one, the deliverance of men from sin; and only those are in reality his people who are truly pious. It is over his believing and redeemed people, distinguished by the name *house of Jacob*, that he will rule forever. ‖ *Of his kingdom;* of his reign, his royal administration. ‖ *There shall be no end.* He will never cease to reign in the hearts of his people. While the world stands, and the work of redemption is going forward, he will rule as King and Lord of the new dispensation; and when the work of redemption is completed, and his office, as the Mediator, shall cease, still the great principles of his government shall rule in the hearts of those whom he shall have saved. Compare 1 Cor. 15: 24.

35. *The Holy Ghost — the power of the Highest.* These expressions are here equivalent. Such repetitions of

overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

36 And behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren:

37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.

38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.

39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill-country with haste, into a city of Juda,

40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

41 And it came to pass, that when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb: and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost.

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence *is* this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44 For lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 And blessed *is* she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy *is* his name.

50 And his mercy *is* on them that fear him, from generation to generation.

51 He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 He hath put down the mighty from *their* seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 He hath filled the hungry

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the same thought by different forms of speech are frequent in the Bible.

36. *Thy cousin.* The more general term *relative* would here be preferable; it would more exactly represent the original word.

39. *The hill country.* There was much hilly country in Judea, the south part of Palestine. ‖ *A city of Juda.* What particular city the parents of John the Baptist lived in, is unknown.

41. *Filled with the Holy Ghost;* the influence of the Holy Spirit, exciting fervent gratitude and the language of praise.

51. *He hath showed strength;* he manifests his power, performs mighty deeds. ‖ *The proud in the imagination of their hearts;* those who indulge haughty thoughts and purposes, in opposing the will of God. ‖ *He hath scattered;* he breaks up their combinations, and defeats their purposes.

52. *The mighty from their seats;* more properly, rulers from their thrones.

with good things, and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of *his* mercy;

55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed, forever.

56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

57 Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbors and her cousins heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

60 And his mother answered and said, Not *so;* but he shall be called John.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing-table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue *loosed*, and he spake, and praised God.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill-country of Judea.

66 And all they that heard *them*, laid *them* up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be? And the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

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55. *As he spake, &c.* Reference is made to the oft-repeated promises of protection and favor to the descendants of Abraham.

The beautiful language of Mary in vs. 46—55, celebrating the power of God, and his condescension to the lowly, is in the true spirit of the Hebrew poetry. It should be compared with the grateful acknowledgment of Hannah in 1 Sam. 2: 1—10.

58. *Cousins;* relatives.

59. *The eighth day.* See Gen. 17: 12.

60. *John.* Compare v. 13.

62. *They made signs to his father.* Compare v. 20.

63. *He asked;* by signs, doubtless. ‖ *A writing-table;* a tablet, a small board covered with a substance suitable for writing on. Such tablets were frequent in Jewish houses. ‖ *Saying.* A person may speak either by audible expressions or by signs. Zacharias was at that time without the power of speech; but he expressed his wishes by writing.

64. *His mouth was opened, &c.* Compare v. 20.

65. *Fear.* More properly, *amazement.*

66. *The hand of the Lord was with him;* the Lord was with him in a merciful manner.

67. *Filled with the Holy Ghost.* See on v. 41. ‖ *Prophesied.* The word *prophet* is applied, in the Scriptures, to persons who spoke, or acted, under a divine influence, whether in predicting future events, or in uttering the praises of God, or exhorting to religious duty. The verb *prophesy*

68 Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69 And hath raised up a horn of salvation for us, in the house of his servant David:

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

72 To perform the mercy *promised* to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

73 The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

76 And thou, child, shalt be called the Prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways;

77 To give knowledge of sal-

is used with the same extent of meaning. The language of Zacharias on this occasion was mostly praise to God for having now so signally commenced the fulfilment of the promises respecting the Messiah. He also distinctly mentioned the office which the infant would hereafter perform, as the herald of the Messiah.

68. *Visited;* visited with favor, kindly regarded. ‖ *Redeemed;* delivered from a lowly and afflicted condition. The Jews had long been in subjection to other nations, and they deeply felt this as a state of political degradation, and as marring the glory of their religion. They fondly anticipated the times of the Messiah, as days of prosperity, both in their secular and their spiritual affairs. Those days such a man as Zacharias would hail in view of the religious prosperity which would then begin to bless the world. But as a Jew, even he would probably connect with this religious prosperity special temporal good for his nation in its being elevated to power. Under a divine influence, he spoke of the desired deliverance as actually commenced.

69. *A horn of salvation.* In the Scriptures, *a horn* is employed as an emblem of *strength*, or *power*. Compare 1 Sam. 2: 10. Ps. 75: 10. 89: 17. See, too, Deut. 33: 17. Such a use of the word *horn* was natural to people who were so much occupied, as the Jews had been, with flocks and herds. The phrase *horn of salvation*, or *power of salvation*, is equivalent to the phrase *powerful one, by whom deliverance will be wrought*, that is, *powerful, mighty deliverer*, or *saviour*. ‖ *In the house, &c.;* in the family of David. See Matt. 1: 1.

70. *Since the world began;* from the earliest times. Predictions concerning the Messiah, the future Saviour, commenced immediately after the fall of Adam, and continued during the time of God's employing prophets to announce his messages to men.

71. *That we should be saved, &c.* The Jews were in subjection, and were regarded by other people with unfriendly feelings. Such a state of things the pious among them would consider as unfavorable to their religious prosperity, and would regard deliverance from it as a most desirable event.

72. *Covenant;* promises, engagements.

73. *To our father Abraham.* Compare Gen. 12: 2, 3. 22: 18.

74. Compare vs. 68, 71.

75. *Holiness and righteousness;* piety towards God and integrity towards men.

76. *Prophet.* See on v. 67. ‖ *Before the face of the Lord;* probably, *before the Lord Messiah.* ‖ *To prepare his ways.* Compare Matt. 3: 3.

77. *Unto his people.* The Jews

vation unto his people, by the remission of their sins,

78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us,

79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and *in* the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.

80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel.

CHAPTER II.

AND it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

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were the Lord's people, and to them first was to be announced the salvation which the Messiah would effect.

78. *The day-spring from on high;* a celestial morning, the dawn of a heavenly day. The coming of the Messiah was, as it were, the commencing of heaven on earth. At his coming, it might well be said, that light had shone forth from heaven, that God had caused a celestial sun to arise upon the earth. Compare Is. 9: 2. 60: 1, 3.

79. *The shadow of death.* See on Matt. 4: 16. ‖ *The way of peace;* the way of true happiness.

Zacharias anticipated the richest blessings for the world in connection with the coming of the Messiah. From the Messiah was to proceed salvation; the Messiah was to be the celestial sun, by whose benignant rays light would be shed on man's darkness, so as to guide him to everlasting bliss. And has not the gospel of Jesus Christ proved itself to be a light from heaven? Are WE walking in this light?

80. *Waxed strong in spirit.* The word *spirit* here has respect both to the mind and the heart, to the intellectual and to the moral qualities. As John advanced in age, he also gave evident proofs of a strong mind and a pious heart. ‖ *The deserts.* See on the word *wilderness* in Matt. 3: 1. ‖ *The day of his showing unto Israel;* the time of his publicly coming forth as the forerunner of the Messiah.

CHAPTER II.

1. *Cesar Augustus;* the name of the Roman emperor at the time here spoken of. ‖ *All the world.* This expression is to be understood in a limited sense. The Romans were in the habit of designating the Roman empire by this extensive term. It was also used in a still more restricted sense, as signifying the country inhabited by the Jews, that is, so to speak, the Jewish world. The same word is used in this last sense in Acts 11: 28, where a famine is spoken of, which afterwards took place in Palestine. The Hebrew word signifying *earth* is frequently used in the Old Testament with reference to *the land*, the country of the Jews. This manner of speaking would naturally lead to a similar use of the word which Luke employed. It may also be observed, that none of the civil historians of the time referred to by Luke make mention of a decree, on the subject here spoken of, affecting the whole empire. They would hardly fail to speak of so extensive a decree, had one been issued in respect to the whole empire. But a decree affecting only a distant and comparatively unimportant appendage of the empire, might well be passed over in silence by them. In the view of Luke, however, it was a highly important item, as connected with the birth of Christ. ‖ *Should be taxed;* more properly, *should be enrolled.* A census was ordered, rather than a levying of taxes for the Roman government. The country of the Jews was not, at the time spoken of, a Roman province. It was a kingdom under Herod the Great, and

2 (*And* this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

3 And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

though not an independent kingdom (see on Matt. 2: 1), yet it was not taxed by the Romans; the tribute collected in the country was paid for the support of Herod's government. The design of Augustus, probably, was, to ascertain the amount of population in this appendage to his empire. The census thus ordered might perhaps be afterwards employed as a basis, to some extent, for taxation, should the government of the country undergo a change. Some years after, when Judea was reduced to the form of a Roman province, a tax was levied; and it occasioned much commotion among the Jews. See Acts 5: 37. But the present enrolling seems to have been quietly submitted to.

2. *This taxing;* this enrolling of the inhabitants. ‖ *Was first made, &c.* There is an historical difficulty in this statement of the evangelist, the entire removal of which requires more accurate information of those times than has been handed down to us. Luke is here speaking of a decree which was issued a short time before the birth of Christ. Yet he seems to say, that the enrolling which this decree enjoined was performed when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. Now, it is the testimony of authentic history, that Cyrenius did not become governor of Syria till Jesus was about ten years of age. It is also known that, at the time of our Lord's birth, the governor of Syria was Saturninus. He was succeeded by Quintus Varus, and Varus was succeeded by Cyrenius, or, according to his Roman name, Quirinus. How then does Luke say, that the enrolling was performed when Cyrenius was governor of Syria? Several explanations have been proposed, the most satisfactory of which appears to be the following: It is probable that Cyrenius was associated in office with Saturninus at the time when this enrolling was made, and might therefore be called by the title which is implied in the language of Luke We know from the testimony of Josephus, the Jewish historian, that Saturninus, previously to this time, had an associate in his office, named Volumnius, and that Josephus applies the same title both to Saturninus and to Volumnius. Now, we have only to suppose that Volumnius had been called away from this office, and that Cyrenius, who, it is also known, had become a distinguished man, had been associated with Saturninus in the government of Syria. But why should Cyrenius, the assistant, be named, rather than Saturninus, the real governor? Because when, ten years after, at the banishment of Archelaus from Judea, Judea was reduced to the form of a Roman province, this same Cyrenius became governor of Syria, and was employed in levying a tax on the province — a measure which excited great indignation among the people. The similarity of these two events, namely, the census and the taxing, would naturally lead to the associating of them both with the same man, even though Cyrenius was merely an assistant of Saturninus when the first enrolling was made. Nor is it improbable that this enrolling was performed under *his* superintendence, rather than under that of Saturninus.

It should also be observed, as somewhat confirming the view just presented, that a literal rendering of the passage would be this: "This enrolment was the first while Cyrenius was governor of Syria." Thus it seems to be distinguished from the census and taxation which took place ten years afterwards, under Cyrenius, and to which, probably, allusion is made in Acts 5: 37.

3. *All;* that is, all the Jews. ‖ *To be taxed;* or, in accordance with what is stated on v. 1, *to enrol their names.*

4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (because he was of the house and lineage of David),

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 And so it was, that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him in swaddling-clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

‖ *Into his own city.* It was customary, among the Jews, to be enrolled according to tribes and families. Hence there was a propriety in each one's repairing to the town which he regarded as his paternal residence, or the place where some distinguished ancestor was born, from whom he was in the habit of tracing his descent.

4. *Galilee. Nazareth. Judea.* See on Matt. 2: 22, 23. ‖ *City of David;* the town of David's birth and early residence. Compare 1 Sam. 16: 1, 11—13. ‖ *Bethlehem.* See on Matt. 2: 1. ‖ *Of the house and lineage,* &c.; of the family and from the line of David.

5. *With Mary.* It is doubtful whether the sacred writer meant to say that Joseph *went up* (v. 4) with Mary, to register his name, that is, went up accompanied by her; or that Joseph went up *to enrol his name* with Mary, that is, to have both their names enrolled. The language will admit either construction. It is most commonly thought, however, that Luke intended to represent Mary as also going to give in her name. The enrolling of the names of females was not usual among the Jews, unless in the case of those females who had come into the possession of an inheritance by reason of their fathers' dying without sons. In that case, the daughters inherited the property; and they were required to marry within the tribe to which their father belonged. See Num. 36: 5—9. From this circumstance it is concluded that Mary had no brothers, and that she inherited what property belonged to the family. She and her husband being of the family of David, they both went to the same town to register their names.

7. *First-born son.* See on Matt. 1: 25. ‖ *Wrapped him in swaddling clothes;* that is, swathed him. It was customary to swathe new-born infants with bandages, so as to prevent distortion of the limbs. ‖ *In a manger.* Some consider the word translated *manger* as signifying *stable,* or a small *shed* or *hovel* connected with the house, and as indicating the apartment in which the mother of Jesus, as well as the infant, was accommodated. The current opinion is, that the word *manger* means really *a crib* intended for cattle to eat from. There are not sufficient reasons for departing from this current opinion. Not only in this verse, but also in vs. 12 and 16, the *manger* seems to be mentioned particularly as employed for placing *the infant,* just as a cradle would be mentioned as containing a babe. There is sufficient evidence, also, that in early times mangers were employed in the East for the use of horses, &c. ‖ *There was no room for them in the inn.* The same reason that led Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, led many others at the same time to this place; and many would of course seek accommodations at the public house. Bethlehem was not a town of sufficient importance to have several such establishments; and thus there was not opportunity to select a suitable place for Mary's temporary residence. In many of

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

the public houses of the East, travellers and their beasts were all accommodated under the same roof; the space was partitioned off, the beasts having their appropriate place, and the travellers theirs. Other public houses were differently arranged, so as to be better adapted for the accommodation of travellers and strangers, without being specially fitted for the animals; yet, doubtless, this second sort would not be destitute of a place for beasts. The inn at Bethlehem was probably of this second kind; and, as it was now filled with company, the only alternative was, that Mary should repair to that part of the establishment which was usually appropriated to the cattle. Unsuitable, however, as such a place was, we yet must not judge of this account by our feelings respecting stables among ourselves. Tents and houses were, at that time, frequently so arranged as to give the domestic beasts a lodging under the same roof with the members of the family; and the servants particularly often lodged in the very same apartments with the cattle. The domestic beasts were also often objects of much endearment; so that it was by no means so repulsive to their feelings to be in the midst of cattle, by night or by day, as it would be to ours. Nor does it necessarily follow, from the brief account of Luke, that the mother of Jesus was treated with entire neglect, and was not at all favored with such conveniences and attendants as humanity, to say the least, would prompt. But, making all the abatements from the meanness of these accommodations that we can, there would undoubtedly have been made, in some way, more suitable provision, had Joseph and Mary been among the wealthy and the honored of the earth.

It may be well to mention here, that, from very early times, a tradition has been handed down that Joseph and Mary repaired to *a cave*, and that Jesus was born in a cave, either in or near Bethlehem. Caves, in Eastern parts of the world, both natural and artificial, were on various occasions resorted to; and it is supposed that, by the bounty of the benevolent and wealthy, some might be furnished with a few conveniences for travellers. In such a cave it has been supposed that Mary found a manger in which to lay her infant. But the tradition was, probably, like many other stories, devised to make the account more acceptable; it being thought somewhat romantic and dignified that Jesus should be born in a cave. The story has a heathen air about it, and probably originated from some of the stories of heathen Greeks and Romans.

Reflections. 1. In how remarkable a manner did God cause ancient prophecy to be fulfilled! The Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem; see Micah 5 : 2. But, in all human probability, after the announcement to Mary, related by Luke (1 : 26, &c.), he would be born in Nazareth. God, however, had so arranged the course of events that the ancient prediction would be literally fulfilled. Compare Matt. 2 : 1—6.

2. The condition of Joseph and Mary, and of Jesus at the time of his birth, shows how unnecessary to true excellence, and to dignity in the sight of God, is earthly greatness. The highest worth of character, and the fullest enjoyment of the divine favor, may be possessed by those whose external circumstances are repulsive. Let us not place our affections on wealth, on fine houses, and furniture, and dress; but let us seek, as the one thing supremely worthy of our pursuit, the honor which cometh from God, and which will advance us to heavenly glory. Compare Luke 16 : 20, 22. 1 Sam. 16 : 7. 1 Cor. 1 : 27—29. Col. 3 : 2.

8. *The same country;* the same region, or district of country. ‖ *Keep-*

9 And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them; and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

12 And this *shall be* a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes, lying in a manger.

13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14 Glory to God in the high-

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ing watch by night; keeping the night-watches. The employment of the shepherds required them to be abroad in the fields by night as well as by day. They were doubtless in the habit of taking their turns of watching and sleeping; so that, during the whole night, some of the company would be awake. The shepherds were probably provided with tents or huts.

9. *The angel.* More properly, *an angel.* ‖ *Came upon them;* suddenly appeared to them. ‖ *The glory of the Lord.* God is represented as surrounded with splendor, an unspeakably bright effulgence. Compare Rev. 21 : 23. 22 : 5. Ps. 104 : 2. When he is spoken of as appearing to men, he is sometimes represented as coming with that brightness. Compare Ex. 24 : 16, 17. 40 : 34. See also Acts 9 : 3. 22 : 6. Thus, in connection with the visit of the angel, there was such a splendor as indicated the presence of the Lord; so that the Lord might be said to have come down in his glory. Angels themselves also, and glorified saints, are described as appearing surrounded with a celestial splendor. Compare Rev. 18 : 1. Luke 9 : 31. It should also be observed, that the name of God is sometimes employed in the Scriptures in order to give intensity to an expression. In conformity with this remark, the phrase *glory of the Lord* may be a very strong expression for *a very brilliant glory* or *splendor;* such a splendor as must be referred to the Lord as its author, and such as was suitable to accompany an angelic visitant; a splendor which indicated that Jehovah was peculiarly near, either personally or by the agency of the angel. ‖ *Sore afraid;* greatly terrified. Feelings of terror would naturally be excited by such an appearance. Compare Judges 6 : 22. 13 : 22. Dan. 10 : 7, 8.

10. *To all people.* More properly, *to all the people,* that is, to the whole Jewish nation. This nation was expecting the Messiah. The news of his having come would be "good tidings." But while this event would be a cause of joy to the Jewish nation, as being a fulfilment of promises made to them, and an accomplishing of their long-cherished expectations, it was the purpose of God, that ultimately every nation on earth should enjoy the benefits of the Messiah's reign.

11. *The city of David.* See on v. 4. Compare Matt. 2 : 5. ‖ *Christ the Lord;* Messiah, the Lord; or, the Lord Messiah. The word *Messiah* means primarily *anointed one;* and as the ceremony of anointing was used in designating kings among the Jews, the word was applied to kings. *The King* whose birth was now announced, was also to have a most extensive dominion. He was to be "Lord of all;" Acts 10 : 36. He was to be "head over all things to the church;" Eph. 1 : 22. He was to be "King of kings and Lord of lords;" Rev. 19 : 16.

13. *Heavenly host;* angels, the heavenly company. Compare Heb. 12 : 22.

14. *Glory;* praise. ‖ *In the high-*

est, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

15 And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16 And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

17 And when they had seen *it*, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18 And all they that heard *it*, wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

19 But Mary kept all these things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

21 And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

22 And when the days of her purification according to the law

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est; on high, in the high heavens; or, in accordance with a manner of speaking prevalent at that time, the highest, the third heaven. See 2 Cor. 12 : 2. The word *heaven* was applied to the region above the surface of the earth. The region of the air was called the first, or lowest heaven; the region which the heavenly bodies appear to occupy, the second; and the region beyond the visible firmament, was called the highest, or third heaven, as being the abode of God, of angels, and of the spirits of the just. ‖ *Peace.* This word, in the Scriptures, conveys very often the general idea of *happiness*, *good* of every sort, particularly *spiritual good.* The birth of the Messiah was a pledge of true bliss to be enjoyed on earth. ‖ *Good will;* the favor of God. The amount of the angels' doxology is, Glory be to God on high! Happiness will now bless the earth. God is propitious to men.

Reflection. How deep an interest did angels manifest in the coming of Jesus Christ! And can *we* put too high an estimate on the blessings of the gospel, or too ardently seek those blessings? Compare 1 Pet. 1 : 12. Luke 15 : 7, 10. What power could the most exalted *earthly* greatness, or enjoyment, have in calling forth from angels expressions of admiration and delight? Let us, like angels, prize heavenly good.

19. *Kept;* laid up in mind.

21. *Eight days,* &c. See Gen. 17 : 12. Compare Luke 1 : 59. ‖ *His name was called* Jesus, &c. Compare 1 : 31. and Matt. 1 : 21.

22. *According to the law of Moses.* See Lev. 12 : 4. ‖ *To present him to the Lord.* The first-born males among the Israelites, both of man and of beast, were claimed by the Lord as specially his, to be devoted to his service. This arrangement had a particular reference to the fact, that when the Israelites were about being delivered from Egypt, the first-born among the Egyptians were all slain by the special providence of God, as a punishment on Pharaoh and his people. The tribe of Levi was afterwards specially set apart as the Lord's property, for attending to the religious service of the nation; and this tribe was thus set apart instead of the first-born males of all the people. Still, however, in order to keep in mind the

of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present *him* to the Lord

23 (As it is written in the law of the Lord, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord);

24 And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtle-doves, or two young pigeons.

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name *was* Simeon; and the same man *was* just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.

26 And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

27 And he came by the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law,

28 Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said,

29 Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30 For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,

31 Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;

32 A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.

Lord's claim and the deliverance from Egypt, the first-born males were brought to the priest, and dedicated to the Lord. They were then redeemed from the service implied in this dedication by the parents' paying five shekels. The dedication to God had respect to being set apart for the external service of the temple; the first-born, like the first-fruits in general, being considered peculiarly valuable, and suitable to be given up to God for his special service. Consult Ex. 13: 2, 11—16. Num. 3: 12, 13, 41. 8: 16. 18: 15, 16.

23. *In the law.* See Exodus 13: 2, 12.

24. *To offer a sacrifice, &c.* The law of Moses required on such occasions a lamb for a burnt-offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtle-dove, for a sin-offering. But in case of poverty the lamb could be dispensed with, and two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, might be offered. See Lev. 12: 6, 8. It would seem, by the statement of Luke, that Joseph and Mary availed themselves of the privilege allowed to the poor. They were in humble circumstances, and they acted accordingly.

25. *Just and devout;* upright and pious. ‖ *The consolation of Israel;* the Messiah, him who was to bring consolation and aid to the people of God. Compare 1: 68—79. ‖ *The Holy Ghost was upon him.* See 1: 41.

26. *See death;* experience death, die. ‖ *The Lord's Christ;* the Lord's anointed one, or Messiah; the King whom the Lord had promised to send to his people. See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, in the first volume of this work, pp. xiii. xiv.

27. *By the Spirit;* under the guidance and influence of the Holy Spirit. ‖ *After the custom of the law.* See on v. 22.

29. *Thy word.* Compare v. 26.

30. *Thy salvation;* him whom thou hast sent as a Saviour, a Deliverer.

32. *To lighten the Gentiles;* to bestow on the Gentiles the light of divine knowledge. ‖ *The glory of thy people Israel;* the one who should secure to Israel distinguished honor. Thus both to Gentiles and to Jews was the Messiah to prove a signal blessing. From him divine knowledge and salvation would proceed over the Gentile world; and by his means the Jewish nation would have

33 And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him.

34 And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this *child* is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against

35 (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also); that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.

36 And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity;

37 And she *was* a widow of

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the distinguished honor of taking the lead in matters pertaining to men's spiritual welfare. From among the Jews was to come the world's spiritual Deliverer. Compare Is. 42 : 6.

34. *The fall;* the ruin. ‖ *Rising again;* salvation, elevation to bliss. Jesus came to save men. But the actual consequence of his coming would be, that many, by rejecting him, would fall into ruin; while many, on the other hand, by becoming his followers, would be raised to consummate bliss. Compare 1 Cor. 1 : 18. 2 Cor. 2 : 15, 16. ‖ *A sign;* a person commissioned by the Lord, and whose character and acts would furnish *signal* evidence of having been sent from God. ‖ *Spoken against;* disobeyed and contemned. And thus the event proved. Jesus furnished the most appropriate signs of having been sent from God; yet he was contemned and rejected. Compare Heb. 12 : 3.

35. *A sword shall pierce*, &c.; thou thyself shalt experience keen anguish of soul. The indignities heaped on Jesus, and the closing scenes of his life, must have occasioned unspeakable anguish to his mother. ‖ *The thoughts of many hearts*, &c.; that the inward purposes, or the real characters, of many may be disclosed. The Messiah did accordingly bring to light the real characters of men: the truly pious among the Jews became known and acknowledged as such; the hypocritical and ungodly were exposed as such, however solemn the professions which they had made, and however highly they had been esteemed for piety by some

36. *A prophetess.* In what sense Anna was a prophetess, cannot be decided. The word may signify a person singularly devoted to God, and remarkably sharing in his favor. It may also signify a person to whom divine communications were made, and who delivered those communications under a divine influence. In the present instance, there would seem to have been made to Anna an extraordinary disclosure from the Lord respecting the child Jesus; and under a divine influence she expressed the thoughts which were occupying her mind. Thus she might be said to have *prophesied*, as Zacharias did in 1 : 67, &c. ‖ *Of the tribe of Aser;* that is, Asher, one of Jacob's sons, after whom a tribe of Israel was named. See Gen. 49 : 20. Deut. 33 : 24. Though, in the time of Christ, the distinction into tribes was not throughout observed, yet individual families and persons retained the knowledge of their descent. ‖ *Seven years from her virginity;* seven years from the time of her being married.

37. *A widow of about fourscore and four years.* She was eighty-four years of age; not that she had been a widow so many years. ‖ *Departed not*, &c. The idea is, she was assiduous in attending on all the religious services of the temple, so that, as it were, the temple was her home. ‖ *Fastings and prayers;* doubtless, private fastings and prayers, as well as those prescribed by the Jewish law. ‖ *Night and day;* continually. Compare Acts 26 : 7. The descrip-

about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day.

38 And she, coming in that instant, gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem.

39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him.

41 Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

42 And when he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem, after the custom of the feast.

43 And when they had fulfilled the days, as they returned, the child Jesus tarried behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother knew not *of it*.

44 But they, supposing him to have been in the company, went a day's journey; and they sought him among *their* kinsfolk and acquaintance.

45 And when they found him not, they turned back again to Jerusalem, seeking him.

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tion given of this aged widow shows that she was regarded as a singularly pious person.

39. *They returned into Galilee.* Luke here passes over the interval which had been spent in Egypt. As an instance of similar omission, compare Acts 9 : 26 with Gal. 1 : 17, 18. For an account of what occurred between Jesus being presented to the Lord in the temple and the settlement in Nazareth, see Matt. 2d chapter.

40. *The child grew,* &c. See 1 : 80. ‖ *Filled with wisdom;* knowledge of divine things. ‖ *The grace of God;* the favor of God.

41. *The feast of the passover.* See on Matt. 26 : 2. This was one of the three festivals, at which all the adult males of the Jews were required to go up to Jerusalem. See Ex. 23 : 14—17. 34 : 23. Deut. 16 : 16. Though females were not commanded to attend, yet they often went, particularly at the celebration of the passover.

42. *Twelve years old.* This was the age at which the Jews began more seriously to initiate their children into the knowledge and practice of their religious observances.

43. *Knew not of it.* This might very easily happen. When the people were going up to Jerusalem, on occasion of the great festivals, and when they were returning, they went in large companies. The children of such companies would naturally associate together, without being particularly under the eye of their parents; and the older members of a company would also associate together for conversation and mutual assistance. It would be taken for granted that the children were somewhere in the company. But, after having travelled as far as they intended to, one day, and making a halt for taking refreshment and spending the night, the members of each family would then collect together, and the children would be sought for.

44. *A day's journey.* This term is sometimes used to signify a distance of between twenty and thirty miles. But, in reference to such a travelling company, or caravan, as is here spoken of, no definite number of miles is intended. It only refers to their having travelled on their homeward journey one day, the distance being more or less, according to the circumstances of the travellers.

46 And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

47 And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

48 And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

49 And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

50 And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them.

51 And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

CHAPTER III.

NOW in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea

46. *After three days;* that is, according to the Jewish mode of speaking, *on the third day.* Compare Matt. 27: 63, 64. The first day was spent in travelling towards Nazareth; the second, in returning to Jerusalem; and on the third, he was found. ‖ *In the temple;* in some court attached to the temple, where the Jewish teachers gave instruction. ‖ *In the midst;* among. ‖ *Doctors;* Jewish teachers of the Mosaic law and of the traditions. ‖ *Asking them questions.* It was the practice of the Jewish teachers both to propose questions to their hearers and to receive questions from them.

49. *Wist;* an obsolete word, signifying *knew.* ‖ *About my Father's business;* the business for which my father, God, sent me into the world. The place, therefore, where the work of instruction in his law was performed, was a suitable place for Jesus. A different rendering of the original may be given, according to which Jesus would be represented as saying, Knew ye not that I ought to be at my Father's? that is, at my Father's house. Why should you go to various places, seeking me? Where should a son be found but at his father's? The temple was the house of God.

50. *They understood not;* entered not fully into his meaning. Even Joseph and Mary had not a complete view of the nature of the object for which Jesus was born. They, doubtless, like many others of the nation, needed both a correction and an enlargement of their views respecting the Messiah, in various respects.

52. Compare v. 40.

HINTS FOR REFLECTION. How worthy of imitation is the example set by Jesus, as above related! 1. He felt a deep interest in religious instruction. His early years were occupied about the Scriptures. 2. He was an obedient son. He furnished an example of filial duty, as well as of excellence in every other respect. How lovely is the spirit of obedience to parents, and of prompt, cheerful compliance with their wishes! Compare fifth commandment, Ex. 20: 12.

CHAPTER III.

1. *Tiberius Cesar;* the emperor of Rome, to whose power the Jews were in subjection. See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, in the first volume, page xiv. II. ‖ *Pontius Pilate, &c.* See

and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,

2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins;

4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be* made smooth;

6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

9 And now also the axe is

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on Matt. 27: 2. ‖ *Herod, &c.* See on Matt. 14: 1. ‖ *Iturea—Trachonitis.* These were sections of the country east of the Jordan. They lay towards the north of that region. ‖ *Abilene.* The most northerly part of the region just mentioned, lying higher up than the sources of the Jordan. Little is known of Lysanias, who governed Abilene at the time here spoken of, there being no particular mention of that tract in the civil historians till several years after the time of which Luke here speaks.

2. *Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests.* Among the Jews there was but one high priest at a time. At the time here spoken of, Caiaphas was the high priest. Annas, his father-in-law, had been in that office, but had been deposed by the Roman governor; and as many as three others had borne the same office before it was committed to Caiaphas. But Annas is believed to have been Caiaphas's assistant, or the vice-high priest, and thus to have been entitled to the appellation here given him. The office of vice-high priest was one of much consequence; and, in addition to the importance of the office, Annas was a man of extensive influence. See on Matt. 26: 57. ‖ *The word of God;* a divine communication. Compare Jer. 1: 2. Ezek. 1: 3. ‖ *Wilderness.* See on Matt. 3: 1.

NOTICE. The particularity of the evangelist in mentioning names, and dates, and places, is a strong proof of the truth of his account. If he had been writing a false narrative, pretending it to be true, he thus furnished very ample and satisfactory means by which his statements could be proved untrue, by their not corresponding to the known history and geography of the country. But between such statements in the Bible, and the history of the times and places given by other writers, there is a most pleasing harmony.

3. Compare Matt. 3: 5, 6.

4—6. Examine the note on Matt. 3: 3. The sixth verse, explained in reference to the Messiah, conveys the idea that the spiritual deliverance, which God was about to effect, would be universally known, and would be very extensively enjoyed.

7—9. See on Matt. 3: 7—10.

laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

Luke represents the Saviour, in general terms, as addressing the language of these verses to "the multitude;" while Matthew relates that they were particularly addressed to the Pharisees and Sadducees. These men were *a part* of the multitude; and while the words were spoken in the hearing of all, they were specially directed to the Pharisees and Sadducees.

10. *What shall we do then?* That is, What shall we do as manifesting the genuineness of our professed repentance? John had enjoined, "Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance;" that is, Amend your lives, enter upon such a course of conduct as will prove you to have become good men. It was to this injunction that the question stated in this verse had reference; and the inquiry amounted to this — What are the fruits worthy of repentance? *The people* here mentioned are the same as are meant by *the multitude* in the seventh verse; and by comparing Matt. 3 : 7, it appears that the Pharisees and Sadducees were particularly addressed.

11. *He answereth.* The answer of John had in view the same thoughts which prompted the question above stated. He wished to show his hearers in what manner the amendment of heart and life, expressed by the word *repentance*, would be shown. In his answers, both in this verse and the following ones, he had respect to the well-known characters of the different classes among his hearers, and to the circumstances and temptations peculiar to each class. Thus, with much practical wisdom, he gave to his replies such a directness as that they could not be misunderstood. ‖ *Unto them;* particularly to the Pharisees and Sadducees. These men were distinguished by a self-seeking spirit, and a disregard to the necessities of others; they neglected the duties of benevolence and charity, to which true religion always prompts. See Matt. 15 : 3—6. 23 : 14, 23, 25. Now, in replying to them, he enforced the principle that repentance would produce, as its appropriate fruits, benevolence, a kind interest in the welfare of others, and an administering to their necessities. And, clearly, if a Pharisee should begin and should continue to distinguish himself by a deep interest in the welfare of others, by searching out and relieving the distressed according to his ability, and by seeking others' happiness rather than his own aggrandizement, he would thus give appropriate evidence of having a new disposition, and of having entered on a truly righteous life. Such a change in his principles and conduct would be a very suitable manifestation that he had complied with the exhortation of John. Accordingly, knowing the characters and the circumstances of this class, John enjoined on them the duty of *imparting relief*, according to their ability, to their needy fellow-men. Compare Matt. 19 : 21. Mark 10 : 21. 1 John 3 : 17. 4 : 20. Not that the external act of giving to the poor had any peculiar merit, or was in itself a holy act, deserving the approbation of God; but that such a course of life would be a suitable exhibition of the new, holy principle which John was inculcating. Compare 1 Cor. 13 : 3.

12. *Publicans.* See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, in the first volume, III. 5. p. xvii.

13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages.

13. *Exact;* demand. The employment in which publicans were engaged exposed them peculiarly to the practice of extortion; and this practice was very common among them. Adapting, then, his reply to their circumstances and character, John enjoined on them an equitable discharge of their office as an appropriate fruit of repentance. Since publicans were distinguished by extortion, if a publican had entered on a life of repentance, that is, had become a pious man, his integrity in performing the publican's office would be a fruit of repentance, and would prove the sincerity of his profession. Other external manifestations of piety he would, indeed, have; but however many other evidences he might furnish, if he had not this, he would not have *the appropriate* one; and all others, without this, would be totally valueless.

14. *Soldiers.* Whether these soldiers were Jews in the employ of the Romans, or in the employ of Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, it is impossible to decide. In replying to their inquiry, John adapted his instructions to the sins and temptations incident to their condition, and showed by what course of conduct, in *their* station, they might give evidence of hearty amendment. ‖ *Do violence,* &c. Indulge not the disposition to treat any one violently, either by words or actions, by terrifying and harassing; indulge not an overbearing, oppressive spirit. To the indulgence of such a spirit a soldier would be peculiarly exposed. ‖ *Neither accuse any falsely.* Reference is made to opportunities which soldiers had of obtaining money, either by threats of accusation, or by falsely accusing. ‖ *Be content with your wages.* Soldiers would be very liable to a discontented spirit as to their wages, especially when not in actual service. This discontented spirit would lead, not only to complaints, but also to dishonest methods of gain. But if they would be truly pious, and "bring forth fruits worthy of repentance," they must desist from all the sins to which they were exposed, and cultivate the opposite holy traits of character. It might well be taken for granted, that, if they desisted from the sins to which they were peculiarly exposed, they would renounce all other sins, and act from right motives.

The amount, then, of John's reply to the question, What shall we do as exhibiting the fruits of repentance? is, Abandon your sins, and lead a righteous life. And this general injunction he applied to the different circumstances of the respective classes among his hearers.

Suggestion. The question is sometimes raised, whether or not John forbade the military profession and the practice of war. The truth is, he expressed no opinion on that question, it not being pertinent to the occasion. He enjoined on all the general duty of repentance; and explained what would be the appropriate fruits of repentance in the different classes of his hearers. If any of his hearers should be convinced that their employment necessarily involved feelings and practices utterly at variance with his directions, so that they could not, with a good conscience, continue in their employment, the path of duty was then plain for those persons. They must on no account violate the great principles which he had enjoined; and if it were impossible for them to continue in their employments without violating those principles, they ought to obey the dictate of enlightened conscience. For instance, if they could not be soldiers

15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;

16 John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:

17 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.

18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.

19 But Herod the tetrarch, being reproved by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.

21 Now, when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

23 And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son

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without doing violence, &c., let conscience then be heard as suggesting a change in their occupation. This, however, it was *their* duty, not *his*, to settle.

It is in this same way that the word of God directs us in respect to the propriety, or the impropriety, of various occupations and practices. Instead of passing sentence on particular employments, or civil arrangements, or modes of life, it lays down the fundamental principles of morality and religion, which are applicable to every human being, whatever be his age, his employment, his engagements, or connections Those fundamental principles he must obey, or he will forfeit the favor of God. His circumstances, or engagements, will not be accepted as an excuse for the cherishing of feelings which are at variance with those principles. And his own conscience must decide whether he can, or cannot, continue in any particular line of life, consistently with those principles. If he chooses to proceed in any given course, regardless of this question and of the claims of conscience, it is at his peril. If he chooses knowingly to resist conscience, it is at his peril. On this subject, however, one man cannot be another's judge. To conscience, enlightened by the Scriptures, and to the Lord of conscience, each must be left.

15. *In expectation;* waiting for something to occur, that might decide whether John was the Messiah or not. ‖ *Mused;* reflected. ‖ *The Christ;* the Messiah.

16, 17. Compare Matt. 3 : 11, 12.

18. *Many other things*, &c. This verse plainly shows that the evangelists have preserved only some abstracts of John's instructions; enough to let us know the topics and the manner of his teaching.

19, 20. Compare Matt. 14 : 3—5 Mark 6 : 17—20.

21, 22. Compare Matt. 3 : 13—17. Mark 1 : 9—11.

23—38. *As was supposed;* accord-

of Joseph, which was *the son* of Heli,

24 Which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi, which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Janna, which was *the son* of Joseph,

25 Which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Amos, which was *the son* of Naum, which was *the son* of Esli, which was *the son* of Nagge,

26 Which was *the son* of Maath, which was *the son* of Mattathias, which was *the son* of Semei, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Juda,

27 Which was *the son* of Joanna, which was *the son* of Rhesa, which was *the son* of Zorobabel, which was *the son* of Salathiel, which was *the son* of Neri,

28 Which was *the son* of Melchi, which was *the son* of Addi, which was *the son* of Cosam, which was *the son* of Elmodam, which was *the son* of Er,

29 Which was *the son* of Jose, which was *the son* of Eliezer, which was *the son* of Jorim, which was *the son* of Matthat, which was *the son* of Levi,

30 Which was *the son* of Simeon, which was *the son* of Juda, which was *the son* of Joseph, which was *the son* of Jonan, which was *the son* of Eliakim,

31 Which was *the son* of Melea, which was *the son* of Menan, which was *the son* of Mattatha, which was *the son* of Nathan, which was *the son* of David,

32 Which was *the son* of Jesse, which was *the son* of Obed, which was *the son* of Booz, which was *the son* of Salmon, which was *the son* of Naasson,

33 Which was *the son* of Aminadab, which was *the son* of Aram, which was *the son* of Esrom, which was *the son* of Phares, which was *the son* of Juda,

34 Which was *the son* of Jacob, which was *the son* of Isaac, which was *the son* of Abraham, which was *the son* of Thara, which was *the son* of Nachor,

35 Which was *the son* of Saruch, which was *the son* of Ragau, which was *the son* of Phalec, which was *the son* of Heber, which was *the son* of Sala,

36 Which was *the son* of Cainan, which was *the son* of Arphaxad, which was *the son* of Sem, which was *the son* of Noe, which was *the son* of Lamech,

37 Which was *the son* of Ma-

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ing to common opinion. Allusion is here tacitly made to the miraculous conception of Jesus. See 1 : 35. In respect to the genealogy recorded in these verses, examine the notes on Matthew 1 : 1—16. It should here be stated, that the genealogy, as presented by Luke, commences with Jesus, and goes up as far as to Adam. Matthew's list of names commences with Abraham, and comes down to Jesus. In order, then, to institute a comparison, the latter part of Luke's list should be compared with the former part of Matthew's.

36. *Which was the son of Cainan.* By comparing the genealogies as preserved in the Old Testament. (Gen. 10 : 24. 11 : 12. 1 Chron. 1 : 24) it would appear that the name Cainan

thusala, which was *the son* of Enoch, which was *the son* of Jared, which was *the son* of Maleleel, which was *the son* of Cainan,

38 Which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the son* of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam, which was *the son* of God.

CHAPTER IV.

AND Jesus, being full of the Holy Ghost, returned from Jordan, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness,

2 Being forty days tempted of the devil. And in those days he did eat nothing: and when they were ended, he afterward hungered.

3 And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread.

4 And Jesus answered him, saying, It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God.

5 And the devil, taking him up into a high mountain, showed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will, I give it.

7 If thou, therefore, wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

9 And he brought him to Jerusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the temple, and said

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is here superfluous, and that Salah was really the son of Arphaxad. By some cause which it is now impossible to ascertain, this name was inserted in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, made a long time before the birth of Christ; and, as the Jews held that translation in high esteem, the name came to be regarded as properly belonging there. As its being retained was a matter of very little interest, and affected no point of doctrine, or history, nor any moral precepts, it seems to have been handed down, without being questioned, among the other names. Luke took from that translation, or from a document copied out of that translation, his list of the names belonging to those very ancient times, that list, as a whole, being acknowledged a public, genuine document. In order to explain how the name could have been introduced into the list as furnished by the Greek translation of the Old Testament, it has been suggested as probable that Salah had another name; which name, being Cainan, was inserted in the margin of some early manuscripts, and was afterwards, either by the translator or by some subsequent copyist, placed in the list with the other names. Having been once inserted, it could easily retain its place, both because the matter was one of little consequence in itself, and because reverence for the sacred Scriptures would naturally prevent a person from removing a word. In a genealogy of Jesus Christ, which Luke intended to give, it was enough for all the purposes designed, if, from the public genealogies preserved and acknowledged by the Jews, he could be shown to have descended from David and from Abraham.

CHAPTER IV.

1—13. See on Matt. 4: 1—11.

unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down from hence:

10 For it is written, He shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee;

11 And in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.

12 And Jesus, answering, said unto him, It is said, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

13 And when the devil had ended all the temptation, he departed from him for a season.

14 And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about.

15 And he taught in their synagogues, being glorified of all.

16 And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath-day, and stood up for to read.

17 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written,

18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath an-

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14. *In the power of the Spirit;* strengthened for his public work by the Holy Spirit, and guided by a divine impulse.

15. *Being glorified;* honored, praised.

16. *Nazareth.* See on Matt. 2: 23. ‖ *Synagogue.* See on Matt. 4: 23. ‖ *Stood up for to read.* In the synagogues there was a presiding officer, by whose request, or permission, any person, thought to be qualified, might read the Scriptures in public, and speak on the portion which had been read. The reading of the Scriptures was performed in a standing posture.

17. *Opened the book.* Books, in the time of Christ, were of a different shape from ours. They were long pieces of parchment or paper, somewhat like our large maps, with a stick at each end, around which they could be rolled up. Hence a word corresponding to our word *roll* was sometimes used to express *a book.* These rolls were written on the inside. The opening of them was the unrolling of them; and shutting, or closing them, was the rolling of them up.

18, 19. See Is. 61: 1, 2. *Anointed me.* By the ceremony of anointing, priests, kings, and prophets, were designated to their office. See Ex 28: 41. 40: 15. 1 Kings 19: 16. 1 Sam. 10: 1. Hence the term *anoint* might be used metaphorically to express the circumstance of having been *divinely appointed*, either to an office in general, or to a particular duty connected with that office. ‖ *To preach the gospel.* The corresponding language in Isaiah is, "preach [proclaim] good tidings." Our Lord intended to convey the thought that the time, so long expected, had now arrived, the time for announcing that the Messiah had come. ‖ *The poor;* those who are in lowly and afflicted circumstances, and whose characters bear a resemblance to their outward state, in their being *meek* and submissive to the divine will. ‖ *Bruised;* crushed, oppressed. The clause *to set at liberty them that are bruised*, appears to have been taken from Is. 58: 6—*to let the oppressed go free.* To the principal quotation there was thus added a clause of similar import from another passage of the same writer. ‖ *The acceptable year of the Lord;* the time when the Lord will be peculiarly favorable. The year of jubilee ap-

ointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,

19 To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

20 And he closed the book, and he gave *it* again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

21 And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?

23 And he said unto them, Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal

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pears to have been selected as an image of happy times. Every fiftieth year was appointed among the Hebrews as a year in which liberty should be proclaimed throughout the land; possessions which had been sold should be restored; and debts should be cancelled. See Lev. 25: 8—17. In this language of the prophet, we have a prediction of most happy times that were to come; and, to render deeply impressive the thought of happy times, various classes of afflicted persons were selected, to whom those times would bring relief. They would be times of joy to the afflicted, to the sorrowful, to the captive, to the blind, to the oppressed; to say all in one word, those times would be one continued year of jubilee. This annunciation of a blissful period to come, Jesus applied to the Messiah's times, which had then commenced; times in which divine knowledge was to be spread abroad, God would show himself merciful to men, and spiritual deliverance would be enjoyed.

20. *He closed the book;* he rolled it up. See on v. 17. ‖ *The minister.* This word does not here mean a preacher, or a ruler of the synagogue, but a person who was employed as a servant in the synagogue. ‖ *Sat down.* This was the usual posture of a teacher among the Jews when addressing the persons around him. Compare 2: 46, and Matt. 5: 1.

22. *Bare him witness;* bore witness to the appropriateness and excellence of his address; spoke well of him. ‖ *Gracious words;* the agreeable, excellent instructions which he had given. ‖ *Is not this Joseph's son?* The reply which Jesus made to this inquiry shows that the question proceeded from an unbelieving, cavilling temper. Though the people were struck with the divine wisdom and eloquence of Jesus, and though some might have been well disposed, yet in general they could not believe that one whom they had known from his childhood, and whose family had occupied no distinguished place, could be the Messiah. Compare Matt. 13: 54—57. Mark 6: 1—4.

23. *Physician, heal thyself.* A common saying among the Jews; the purport of which was, Pursue the same course, in regard to your own claims, that you would recommend to another person making similar claims; give us such evidence as you would require another to give; perform among us such miracles as we hear that you have wrought in Capernaum, if you wish us to believe that you are the Messiah. Their demand that he should display before them his miraculous power, proceeded not from a candid desire to see the proper evidence, in order that they might heartily yield to it, but rather from a spirit of curiosity, and from a feeling that they had a special claim

thyself: whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country.

24 And he said, Verily, I say unto you, No prophet is accepted in his own country.

25 But I tell you of a truth, Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land:

on their own townsman for such a display. In reality, they were predisposed to slight him, and to reject his claim of being the Messiah. ‖ *Capernaum.* See on Matt. 4 : 13. ‖ *Thy country;* more strictly, thine own town.

24. *Prophet;* religious teacher. ‖ *Is accepted;* finds favor. The remark of Jesus was a common saying, founded on the fact that those with whom we have been familiar from early life are not viewed by us, in their official capacity, with so much reverence as a stranger would be who should sustain the same office. This remark Jesus introduced, as furnishing one reason for not complying with their demand. He knew that no good effect would result from gratifying the spirit which they had manifested.

25. *But I tell you, &c.* He proceeded still further to vindicate himself for not complying with their demand, by observing that his declining to show them special attention was in harmony with some instances of God's dealings, in ancient times, with their nation. The Jews of old, regarding the Lord's prophets as peculiarly theirs, and themselves as peculiarly his people, might have thought that, especially in seasons of distress, it would be *they* who would be particularly favored, rather than persons not belonging to the chosen people; and that those who lived beyond the boundaries of the sacred territory would not be preferred to themselves in the distribution of divine bounties. Yet, on two memorable occasions, related in their sacred books, it was Gentiles, not Jews, who were distinguished by the favor of God; it was Gentiles, not Jews, to whom miraculous power was manifested, and for whom the actions of a prophet were performed. Just so in the case of the people of Nazareth. However they might think that, from the peculiar connection of Jesus with their town, they had a special claim, Jesus judged differently, and chose to go abroad, beyond their limits, in the exercise of his miraculous powers. Nor would they have any more right to complain of him, than the Jews, in the instances which Jesus was about to adduce, had to complain of God. God acted according to his own view of propriety, without consulting the unreasonable desires and prejudices of their nation. He reserved to himself the right of bestowing his favors, especially extraordinary favors, on whomsoever it should please him to bestow them, without explaining the reasons of his conduct. So Jesus would act according to his own judgment of what was suitable and right, without consulting the unreasonable prejudices of his townsmen, or the spirit of curiosity which they were cherishing. Nor did this result from unkindness, or from want of accommodation, on the part of the Saviour; it resulted from his intuitive knowledge of what the character of the people and his own claims required. It was proper that he should confer his favors on whomsoever it pleased him to confer them, without being guided by the selfish, personal views of any. The Saviour's language conveyed also an implication, that the inhabitants of Nazareth were badly disposed towards him, and that the exertion of his miraculous power among them would be of little avail. ‖ *Elias;* Elijah. The incident here referred to is related in 1 Kings, 17th chapter. ‖ *Was shut up.* A figurative way of expressing that rain was withheld. Compare Gen. 8 : 2. ‖ *Three years and six months.* See also James 5 : 17. In 1 Kings 18 : 1, no mention is made of *six months.* Jesus here

26 But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, *a city* of Sidon, unto a woman *that was* a widow.

27 And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

28 And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,

29 And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

30 But he, passing through the midst of them, went his way,

stated the length of time as it was commonly spoken of among the people. And the manner in which six months came to be mentioned in addition to the three years, is probably to be sought in the fact that in Palestine there was generally a suspension of rain for about six months, from April to October. When the rain, called the *early* rain, was expected in October, on the occasion referred to by our Lord, it was withholden, and the drought continued three years from that time. During the preceding six months, also, there had not been rain. Thus the whole time during which rain had not fallen, was three years and six months.

26. *Unto none of them;* that is, to none of the widows *in Israel*. The word *them* is here emphatic, as distinguishing the *Israelitish* widows from a widow who was *not an Israelite*. ‖ *Save;* but. That is, *But he was sent*. ‖ *Sarepta*. The Greek method of spelling the Hebrew name *Zarephath*. See 1 Kings 17: 9. Zarephath may be seen on the map, in the vicinity of Sidon. ‖ *Sidon*. See on Matt. 11: 21.

27. *Lepers*. See on Matt. 8: 2. ‖ *Elisseus*. The Greek method of spelling the Hebrew name *Elisha*. For the account here referred to, see 2 Kings, 5th chapter. ‖ *None of them*. That is, none of those lepers *in Israel*. ‖ *Saving;* but. That is, But Naaman *a Syrian* (not an Israelite) was cleansed. As, then, in the cases referred to, *Israelites* were passed by in the bestowal of God's special favors, and *Gentiles* received those favors, ● the inhabitants of Nazareth, who seemed to think that they had a special claim on Jesus, would be passed by, and people of *other* places would witness and enjoy the exercise of his miraculous powers.

28. *Were filled with wrath;* because they thought themselves slighted, and were not disposed to acquiesce in the decisions of infinite wisdom.

Remark. We must not make our expectations, or curiosity, or wisdom, the rule by which to judge of God's dispensations. It becomes us in humility to surrender ourselves to God, and to acquiesce in all his methods of administration. Our short-sightedness cannot comprehend the boundless plan of God.

29. *That they might cast him down headlong*. About two miles from the present town of Nazareth is shown a rocky height, the descent from which, in a perpendicular direction, is fifty feet, and down which it would be easy to cast a person who might unawares have been brought to the summit. A person thus precipitated would inevitably perish. It is probable that the ancient town of Nazareth extended further towards this rocky eminence than the modern town; and an excited rabble might easily urge on a person to a considerable distance in a short time, and, by crowding against him, might push him from the summit. The word *hill*, in this verse, is probably not to be understood of a single elevation, but of a *hilly* region, or *a hilly range*.

30. *Passing through the midst of them, &c.* Whether a miraculous in

31 And came down to Capernaum, a city of Galilee, and taught them on the Sabbath-days.

32 And they were astonished at his doctrine: for his word was with power.

33 And in the synagogue there was a man which had a spirit of an unclean devil; and he cried out with a loud voice,

34 Saying, Let *us* alone; what have we to do with thee, *thou* Jesus of Nazareth? art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God.

35 And Jesus rebuked him, saying, Hold thy peace, and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him, and hurt him not.

36 And they were all amazed, and spake among themselves, saying, What a word *is* this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out.

37 And the fame of him went out into every place of the country round about.

38 And he arose out of the

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fluence was exerted on the crowd, or not, we are not informed. It is very possible that some of the persons around Jesus might have favored his escape; while the consciousness of guilt on the part of others, and the mild dignity of the Saviour's countenance, as, in silence and self-possessed majesty, he cast his eyes on the crowd, might have awed them, and diverted them from their mad purpose. Certain, however, it is, that He who could shut the lions' mouths in behalf of Daniel, and prevent the flames from kindling on his servants in the furnace, could effectually repress the rage of this tumultuous assemblage, and lead the Saviour unharmed through the midst of them.

31. *To Capernaum.* It would seem, from Matt. 4: 13, that Jesus, after this time, made Capernaum the principal place of his residence. The spirit which his townsmen had manifested was probably the cause of his selecting another town as his more usual residence.

32. *Doctrine;* teaching. See Matt. 7: 28. ‖ *His word was with power;* his instructions were powerful and impressive. See Matt. 7: 29.

Hints for Reflection. 1. Popular applause —— how soon may it be succeeded by popular hatred and persecution! Compare v. 22 with vs. 28, 29.

2. How readily does an unsubmissive disposition towards God betray itself! and to what excesses of language and conduct may it lead! vs. 28, 29.

3. God designs, by his benefits, to promote our true welfare, not to gratify mere curiosity and unreasonable wishes. v. 23.

4. We ought to be pleased with every exhibition of true piety in any person, and candidly and devoutly receive religious truth, by whomsoever it is imparted. Let us love *the truth*, rather than the circumstances in which the truth is presented to us. v. 24.

5. Let us admire the goodness of God, which is not restricted within the narrow limits of human prejudice. Let us also, with true benevolence, rejoice in all the blesings which are bestowed on others. vs. 25—27.

33—37. Compare Mark 1: 23—28. *What a word is this!* The term translated *word* sometimes means *thing*, or *matter*. Thus, with reference to the event which had just taken place, the people said, What a thing this is! Compare Mark 1: 27.

38—44. Compare Matt. 8: 14—17. Mark 1: 29—39. *Thou art Christ;*

synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her.

39 And he stood over her, and rebuked the fever; and it left her: and immediately she arose and ministered unto them.

40 Now, when the sun was setting, all they that had any sick with divers diseases, brought them unto him: and he laid his hands on every one of them, and healed them.

41 And devils also came out of many, crying out, and saying, Thou art Christ, the Son of God. And he, rebuking *them*, suffered them not to speak: for they knew that he was Christ.

42 And when it was day, he departed, and went into a desert place; and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them.

43 And he said unto them, I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also, for therefore am I sent.

44 And he preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

CHAPTER V.

AND it came to pass, that as the people pressed upon him to hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret,

2 And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing *their* nets.

3 And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's, and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down, and taught the people out of the ship.

4 Now, when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught.

5 And Simon, answering, said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing; nevertheless, at thy word I will let down the net.

6 And when they had this done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes: and their net brake.

7 And they beckoned unto *their* partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come and help them. And they came, and filled both the ships, so that they began to sink.

8 When Simon Peter saw *it*, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord.

9 For he was astonished, and all that were with him, at the

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thou art the Messiah. ‖ *That he was Christ;* that he was the Messiah.

CHAPTER V.

1—11. See on Matt. 4: 18—22. Mark 1: 16—20. *The word of God;* the instructions respecting the divine kingdom; that is, as we speak, the gospel. ‖ *The lake of Gennesaret* · another name for the sea of Galilee.

8. *Depart from me, &c.* The reverence with which Peter became impressed, made him feel utterly unworthy to be near so holy and powerful a person as Jesus.

REMARK. A sense of the divine

draught of the fishes which they had taken:

10 And so *was* also James and John the sons of Zebedee, which were partners with Simon. And Jesus said unto Simon, Fear not: from henceforth thou shalt catch men.

11 And when they had brought their ships to land, they forsook all, and followed him.

12 And it came to pass, when he was in a certain city, behold, a man full of leprosy: who, seeing Jesus, fell on *his* face, and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

13 And he put forth *his* hand and touched him, saying, I will: Be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

14 And he charged him to tell no man: but go, and show thyself to the priest, and offer for thy cleansing, according as Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.

15 But so much the more went there a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear and to be healed by him of their infirmities.

16 And he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed.

17 And it came to pass on a certain day, as he was teaching, that there were Pharisees and doctors of the law sitting by, which were come out of every town of Galilee, and Judea, and Jerusalem: and the power of the Lord was *present* to heal them.

18 And behold, men brought in a bed a man which was taken with a palsy: and they sought *means* to bring him in, and to lay *him* before him.

19 And when they could not find by what *way* they might bring him in, because of the multitude, they went upon the house-top, and let him down through the tiling with *his* couch, into the midst before Jesus.

20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.

21 And the scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?

22 But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he, answering, said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts?

23 Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Rise up and walk?

24 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins (he said unto the sick of the palsy),

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holiness and majesty, and an exhibition of any uncommon excellence of character, often fills a good man with shame at his own sinfulness, and with awe towards Him who is perfection itself. Compare Job 42: 5, 6. Isaiah 6: 5. Revelation 1: 17. How becoming it is in us, so sinful, to cherish the deepest humility and self-abasement!

12—16. Compare Matt. 8: 2—4. Mark 1: 40—45.

17—26. Compare Mark 2: 1—12. Matt. 9: 2—8. *To heal them*; that is, those who had need of healing;

I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch, and go unto thy house.

25 And immediately he arose up before them, and took up that whereon he lay, and departed to his own house, glorifying God.

26 And they were all amazed, and they glorified God, and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

27 And after these things he went forth, and saw a publican named Levi, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he said unto him, Follow me.

28 And he left all, rose up, and followed him.

29 And Levi made him a great feast in his own house; and there was a great company of publicans, and of others that sat down with them.

30 But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?

31 And Jesus, answering, said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick.

32 I came not to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.

33 And they said unto him, Why do the disciples of John fast often, and make prayers, and likewise *the disciples* of the Pharisees; but thine eat and drink?

34 And he said unto them, Can ye make the children of the bride-chamber fast while the bridegroom is with them?

35 But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.

36 And he spake also a parable unto them: No man putteth a piece of a new garment upon an old: if otherwise, then both the new maketh a rent, and the piece that was *taken* out of the new, agreeth not with the old.

37 And no man putteth new wine into old bottles; else the new wine will burst the bottles, and be spilled, and the bottles shall perish.

38 But new wine must be put into new bottles, and both are preserved.

39 No man, also, having drunk old *wine*, straightway desireth new: for he saith, The old is better.

CHAPTER VI.

AND it came to pass on the second Sabbath after the first, that he went through the corn-fields; and his disciples plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing *them* in *their* hands

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the sick, who had been brought thither.

27—39. Compare Matt. 9: 9—17. Mark 2: 13—22.

CHAPTER VI.

1—11. Compare Matt. 12: 1—14. Mark 2: 23—28. 3: 1—6. *The second Sabbath after the first*; literally rendered, *the second-first Sabbath*. It is generally believed that this double designation of a certain Sabbath, as being the *second-first*, has respect to two things; in respect to one of

2 And certain of the Pharisees said unto them, Why do ye that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath-days?

3 And Jesus, answering them, said, Have ye not read so much as this, what David did, when himself was a hungered, and they which were with him;

4 How he went into the house of God, and did take and eat the show-bread, and gave also to them that were with him, which it is not lawful to eat but for the priests alone?

5 And he said unto them, That the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath.

6 And it came to pass also on another Sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue, and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered:

7 And the scribes and Pharisees watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath-day; that they might find an accusation against him.

8 But he knew their thoughts, and said to the man which had the withered hand, Rise up, and stand forth in the midst. And he arose, and stood forth.

9 Then said Jesus unto them, I will ask you one thing; Is it lawful on the Sabbath-days to do good, or to do evil? to save life, or to destroy *it?*

10 And looking round about upon them all, he said unto the man, Stretch forth thy hand. And he did so: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

11 And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus.

12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

13 And when it was day, he called *unto him* his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named Apostles;

14 Simon (whom he also named Peter) and Andrew his brother, James and John, Philip and Bartholomew,

15 Matthew and Thomas, James *the son* of Alpheus, and Simon called Zelotes,

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which this Sabbath was *second*, and in respect to the other, it was *first*. The law of the passover required that in the month Nisan, on the fourteenth day, at evening, the paschal lamb should be eaten (Lev. 23: 5); the next day, the fifteenth, the festival of unleavened bread commenced, and that day was a day of rest in which no work was to be done; it was a sacred day, and, according to the Jewish mode of speaking, it was a *Sabbath*, (Lev. 23: 6, 7.) On the next day, the sixteenth, a ripe sheaf was to be presented as an offering to the Lord (Lev. 23: 10, 11); and from this sixteenth day, seven full weeks were to be reckoned, as bringing on the festival of pentecost, (Lev. 23: 15, 16,) in commemoration of the harvest. Now, the Sabbath in the first of these seven weeks was probably the one here designated. It was *second* in regard to the day of rest on the fifteenth; it was *first* in regard to the series which was to introduce the pentecost.

11. *Filled with madness;* exceedingly enraged.

12—16. Compare Matt. 10: 2—4. Mark 3: 13—19. *Judas the brother of James;* the same that is called by the other evangelists *Lebbeus*, or *Thad-*

16 And Judas *the brother* of James, and Judas Iscariot, which also was the traitor.

17 And he came down with them, and stood in the plain; and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the sea-coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

18 And they that were vexed with unclean spirits: and they were healed.

19 And the whole multitude sought to touch him; for there went virtue out of him, and healed *them* all.

20 And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said, Blessed *be ye* poor; for yours is the kingdom of God.

21 Blessed *are ye* that hun-

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deus. By either of these names this person was known.

17—19. Compare Matt. 4: 25. *Tyre and Sidon*. See at the north-west part of the map of Canaan. ‖ *Virtue;* healing power. See Mark 5: 30.

There next follows the substance of our Lord's sermon on the mount, given by Matthew in chapters 5—7. Luke does not mention the circumstance of his having gone up the mountain to address the people; but Matthew does mention this additional circumstance. See the remarks introducing the notes on the fifth chapter of Matthew. The language of Luke in the former part of this discourse is slightly different from that of Matthew. Instead of directing our minds at once to traits of character, it presents certain circumstances of external condition, as being connected with blessings, or with the divine displeasure. But these external circumstances are regarded as corresponding with the *real state of the heart;* and it is on that principle that the favor, or the displeasure, of God is represented as connected with outward condition. This, too, was in accordance with the scriptural usage to which the Jews were accustomed. For instance, the words *poor* and *meek*, or *humble*, are in the Old Testament used as nearly synonymous; and the words signifying *rich* and *haughty* are used as nearly equivalent.

Luke shows not only who are truly blessed; he also presents the contrast, and shows how undesirable are certain outward circumstances, or conditions, as exposing to coming misery. It is, however, taken for granted that the inward character bears a resemblance to the outward condition. This reverse of the picture Matthew does not present. Probably neither Matthew nor Luke presents us with the whole that the Saviour uttered on this occasion. Nor is it a matter of any importance to us, which of them, or whether either of them, has given, in every instance, the precise form of words which the Saviour employed. It is the thoughts, the sentiments uttered, that we are mainly concerned to know.

20. *Blessed be ye poor;* ye that are in lowly circumstances, and cherish the disposition which corresponds with those circumstances; namely, a lowly mind. As the accessory idea of *a lowly mind* was connected with *lowly circumstances*, the word *poor* came to be equivalent to the word *lowly*, or *humble*, whatever might be the person's external condition. Hence Matthew says, Blessed are *the poor in spirit*. The poor, to whom blessings are here promised, are those whose characters correspond with that of the *poor man* mentioned in Ps. 34: 6. Compare Matt. 5: 3.

21. *Ye that hunger now;* ye whose necessities in regard to the body are connected with a sense of your necessities in regard to the soul, and

ger now: for ye shall be filled. Blessed *are ye* that weep now: for ye shall laugh.

22 Blessed are ye when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach *you*, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.

23 Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward *is* great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

24 But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.

25 Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh now! for ye shall mourn and weep.

26 Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.

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who are hungering for spiritual good. Compare Matt. 5 : 6. || *Ye that weep now;* ye that are afflicted, and that mourn on account of sin. || *Shall laugh;* shall be made happy. Compare Matt. 5 : 4.

22, 23. Compare Matt. 5 : 10—12.

24. *You that are rich;* you who cherish the disposition which a state of wealth naturally engenders; namely, attachment to this world, and neglect of God and heaven. || *Your consolation.* All the happiness which you can have while indulging this disposition is already yours, and none is reserved for you in another world.

25. *You that are full;* abounding in every worldly enjoyment, and satisfied with your present portion — a condition and character the opposite of those which are expressed by the word *hunger* in v. 21. || *Ye shall hunger;* ye shall be reduced to want, to a destitution of all good. Of course, the future world is here meant. || *You that laugh now;* you who possess present worldly pleasure, and are negligent of heavenly good. || *Mourn and weep.* Your present joy will be turned to sorrow.

26. *When all men shall speak well of you;* when men who are unfriendly to the Messiah, and to his religion, shall see nothing in you which they dislike; when men who would dislike your Master, will yet not dislike you. In such circumstances, there would be reason to fear that the disciples had not manifested a resemblance to their Master, and consequently ought not to regard themselves as candidates for the blessings which he promises to his faithful followers. || *False prophets.* False prophets accommodated their instructions to the popular desires. See 1 Kings 22 : 6—14. Jer. 28th chapter. The disciples of Jesus, like their Master, must not seek popular favor.

NOTICE. While the purity and benevolence of Christian character do not fail to command respect, yet some of the fundamental principles of the Christian religion are regarded with aversion by those who do not give their hearts to Christ. And therefore some men, who betray bitter feelings towards the distinctive principles of the Christian religion, cannot but applaud the fruits of those very principles. There are men, too, who, viewing Christians solely in the light of those distinctive principles, would join in denouncing the followers of Christ, notwithstanding the acknowledged excellence of many Christians. Thus they would show what is really in their hearts. The Saviour, however, seems in this language rather to refer to such times of opposition as were then speedily to come, and long to continue. If, while he himself was an object of hatred, the disciples should be objects of favor with all men, they could have little ground for claiming to be his fol-

27 But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you,

28 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.

29 And unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek, offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloak, forbid not *to take thy* coat also.

30 Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask *them* not again.

31 And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.

32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them.

33 And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same.

34 And if ye lend *to them* of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again.

35 But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and *to* the evil.

36 Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.

37 Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven:

38 Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal, it shall be measured to you again.

39 And he spake a parable unto them: Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?

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lowers, and for expecting the blessings which he came to bestow.

27—36. Compare Matt. 5: 38—48.

31. Compare Matt. 7: 12.

32. *What thank have ye?* what ground for thanks or for reward; what special good desert.

35. *Hoping for nothing again;* without expecting similar favors in return.

37, 38. Compare Matt. 7: 1, 2. *Give into your bosom.* Allusion is made to the full, flowing mantle which was usually worn, and which, being held up by the corners, would answer the purpose of a pocket for carrying articles in. The expression corresponds to ours, *into your lap.*

39. This verse appears to have been spoken by our Lord on another occasion. See Matt. 15: 14. The evangelist Luke often collects together, without an obvious connection, some of the very grave maxims of our Lord. He seems to have been more anxious to preserve the sayings, than to notice the particular connection in which they were delivered. The general principle, however, implied in this verse, was applicable to the disciples who had just heard so important precepts from their Master. They were to be teachers; it was incumbent, then, on themselves to receive and practise his instructions; else their own instructions would not tend to the benefit of men, but their fellow-men, with themselves, would stumble on in darkness, and sink to misery.

40 The disciple is not above his master; but every one that is perfect shall be as his master.

41 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

42 Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite! cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.

43 For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

44 For every tree is known by his own fruit: for of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble-bush gather they grapes.

45 A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.

46 And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?

47 Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will show you to whom he is like:

48 He is like a man which built a house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock; and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it; for it was founded upon a rock.

49 But he that heareth, and doeth not, is like a man that without a foundation built a house upon the earth, against which the stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.

CHAPTER VII.

NOW, when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people, he entered into Capernaum.

2 And a certain centurion's

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40. This verse, too, was probably spoken on a different occasion. See Matt. 10: 24, 25. But, like the preceding, being of the nature of a proverbial saying, the principle involved in it may apply to the following parts of our Lord's discourse. As introduced here, it seems to convey the hint that a religious teacher, in order fully to perform his office, should be free from fault. *Shall be as his Master;* should be, should aim to be.

41, 42. Compare Matt. 7: 3—5.

43, 44. Compare Matt. 7; 16—18.

45. Compare Matt. 12: 34, 35. The remark, as here introduced, happily explains and enforces the thought presented in the two preceding verses.

46—49. Compare Matt. 7: 22—27. *When the flood arose;* when there was an inundation.

CHAPTER VII.

1—10. Compare Matt. 8: 5—13. *The elders of the Jews.* This title was given to men whose age, and experience, and weight of character,

servant, who was dear unto him, was sick, and ready to die.

3 And when he heard of Jesus, he sent unto him the elders of the Jews, beseeching him that he would come and heal his servant.

4 And when they came to Jesus, they besought him instantly, saying, That he was worthy for whom he should do this:

5 For he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue.

6 Then Jesus went with them. And when he was now not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to him, saying unto him, Lord, trouble not thyself; for I am not worthy that thou shouldest enter under my roof:

7 Wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed.

8 For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers; and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

9 When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

10 And they that were sent, returning to the house, found the servant whole that had been sick.

11 And it came to pass the day after, that he went into a city called Nain; and many of his disciples went with him, and much people.

12 Now, when he came nigh to the gate of the city, behold, there was a dead man carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow; and much people of the city was with her.

13 And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.

14 And he came and touched the bier; and they that bare *him* stood still. And he said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise.

15 And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And he delivered him to his mother.

16 And there came a fear on all: and they glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is

caused them to be selected for various offices. In the present instance, the term may refer to the Jewish magistrates of the town, or to the officers of the synagogue.

11. *Nain;* a town in Galilee about two miles south of mount Tabor.

12. *Gate of the city.* Anciently, towns were surrounded by walls, in which gates were built.

14. *The bier.* Among the Jews, coffins were not used for the dead. The corpse was wrapped in folds of linen, and placed on a bier, to be carried out for burial. Hence there was no impediment to the young man's sitting up, as soon as life was restored.

16. *A fear;* amazement.

NOTICE the deep interest which our Lord felt in human woes, and the

risen up among us; and, That God hath visited his people.

17 And this rumor of him went forth throughout all Judea, and throughout all the region round about.

18 And the disciples of John showed him of all these things.

19 And John, calling *unto him* two of his disciples, sent *them* to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

20 When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

21 And in that same hour he cured many of *their* infirmities, and plagues, and of evil spirits; and unto many *that were* blind he gave sight.

22 Then Jesus, answering, said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

23 And blessed is *he*, whosoever shall not be offended in me.

24 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?

25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.

26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.

27 This is *he* of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women, there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.

29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

31 And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?

32 They are like unto chil-

kindness which he was always ready to exercise towards the afflicted.

18—35. Compare Matt. 11: 2—19.

29. *All the people and the publicans.* These are the same that, in Matt. 11: 12, are called *the violent*, that is, those who eagerly received the news of the Messiah's having come. ‖ *Justified God;* acknowledged the justice of God in calling them to repentance; obeyed and honored him.

30. *Lawyers.* See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, in the first volume, III. 4. page xvi. ‖ *The counsel of God;* the purposes, kind designs of God. ‖ *Against themselves;* to their own injury.

dren sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.

33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.

34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

35 But Wisdom is justified of all her children.

36 And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat.

37 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster-box of ointment,

38 And stood at his feet behind *him*, weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment.

39 Now, when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw *it*, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman *this is* that toucheth him; for she is a sinner.

40 And Jesus, answering, said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.

41 There was a certain creditor, which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty:

42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me, therefore, which of them will love him most?

43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that *he* to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet

36. *Sat down to meat;* reclined at table. See on Matt. 8 : 11.

37. *Was a sinner;* had been known as a vicious person, regardless of the ordinary forms of religion. No specification of guilt is made. ‖ *Alabaster box of ointment.* See on Matt. 26 : 7.

38. *Stood at his feet behind him.* This particular in the description clearly shows that our modern custom of sitting at table was not then in use. But by recollecting that persons at table placed themselves in a recumbent posture, and at full length on one of their sides, the circumstance appears a very natural one. See on Matt. 26 : 7.

39. *A prophet;* a divinely commissioned teacher, and one endued with supernatural knowledge.

41. *Pence.* See on Matt. 18 : 28.

42. *He frankly forgave, &c.* He freely, gratuitously remitted the debt in respect to both of them.

with tears, and wiped *them* with the hairs of her head.

45 Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

46 My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

47 Wherefore, I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, *the same* loveth little.

48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.

49 And they that sat at meat with him, began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also?

50 And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

CHAPTER VIII.

AND it came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve *were* with him,

2 And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils,

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47. *Wherefore*, &c. That is, since she has shown so much affection for me, I argue that she is conscious of having had *much* forgiven to her. She feels that she has been a *great* sinner, and has received *great* forgiveness; hence it is that she manifests so great love for me. The point which the Saviour wished to show was, that the woman had a good reason for feeling and expressing so much love; and that therefore there was a good reason for his receiving from her these expressions of strong affection. The reason was, she had received forgiveness of numerous and great sins. The Saviour did not convey the impression that forgiveness had been bestowed on her in consequence of her love to him; but that her love to him was thus strong, because she had received forgiveness, and forgiveness to a great extent. There was a great difference between this woman's conduct and the conduct of Simon, who had invited our Lord; and the difference arose from the fact, that the woman felt herself under greater obligations to Jesus than did Simon. Whether his sins had been pardoned or not, is not material as to the point which the Saviour designed to illustrate.

48—50. Compare what is related in Matt. 9: 2—6.

TOPICS FOR REFLECTION. 1. A strong love to the Saviour is perfectly reasonable. v. 47.

2. We ought to be willing to manifest our love to the Saviour. vs. 44—46.

3. We ought not to be surprised if those who feel no love to the Saviour, cannot sympathize with our religious exercises, or if they even think them unreasonable. v. 39. Compare 1 John 3: 1.

4. Forgiveness of sins is a just ground of peace and joy. v. 50.

5. In whom, but in Jesus, can we trust for pardon, peace of conscience, and salvation? v. 50.

CHAPTER VIII.

2. *Magdalene*. See Matt. 27: 56. ‖ *Seven devils*. She might have been repeatedly afflicted with demoniacal possession, or her case might have been one peculiarly forlorn and aggravated, till, at length, she was effectually relieved. Compare Mark 5: 9. Matt. 12: 45.

3 And Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance.

4 And when much people were gathered together, and were come to him out of every city, he spake by a parable:

5 A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way-side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it.

6 And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture.

7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with it, and choked it.

8 And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bare fruit a hundred-fold. And when he had said these things, he cried, He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

9 And his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?

10 And he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand.

11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

12 Those by the way-side, are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved.

13 They on the rock *are they*, which, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, which for a while believe, and in time of temptation fall away.

14 And that which fell among thorns, are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares, and riches, and pleasures of *this* life, and bring no fruit to perfection.

15 But that on the good ground are they, which, in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep *it*, and bring forth fruit with patience.

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3. *Herod's steward;* the one who had the management of Herod's private affairs. Herod was the ruler of Galilee. ‖ *Ministered unto him.* See on Matt. 27 : 55. ‖ *Substance;* property, possessions.

4—8. Compare Matt. 13 : 1—9. Mark 4 : 1—9.

9, 10. The brief manner of speaking here used by Luke is explained by the more copious manner of Matt. 13 : 10—13. See the notes on those verses and on Mark 4 : 12. *That seeing, they might not see,* &c. In conformity with the more full statements of Matthew, and the remarks on the passages just mentioned, and the usage of the Greek language these words are equivalent to the expression *For that* [because] *seeing, they do not perceive; and hearing* [or, and though they hear], *they do not understand;* they are dull of apprehension, and cannot receive the truths which I have to announce. It was not in judgment, so much as in mercy and condescension, that Jesus spoke in parables. And though the design of his parables was not always apprehended, yet they would ultimately prove beneficial to the people.

11—15. Compare Matt. 13 : 18—23. Mark 4 : 14—20. *Bring forth fruit with patience;* that is, with perseverance, continually.

16 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth *it* under a bed; but setteth *it* on a candlestick, that they which enter in may see the light.

17 For nothing is secret, that shall not be made manifest; neither *any thing* hid, that shall not be known, and come abroad.

18 Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.

19 Then came to him *his* mother and his brethren, and could not come at him for the press.

20 And it was told him *by certain*, which said, Thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee.

21 And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it.

22 Now it came to pass on a certain day, that he went into a ship with his disciples: and he said unto them, Let us go over unto the other side of the lake. And they launched forth.

23 But as they sailed, he fell asleep: and there came down a storm of wind on the lake; and they were filled *with water*, and were in jeopardy.

24 And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then he arose, and rebuked the wind, and the raging of the water. and they ceased, and there was a calm.

25 And he said unto them, Where is your faith? And they, being afraid, wondered, saying one to another, What manner of man is this! for he commandeth even the winds and water, and they obey him.

26 And they arrived at the country of the Gadarenes, which is over against Galilee.

27 And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in *any* house, but in the tombs.

28 When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, *thou* Son of God most high? I beseech thee torment me not.

29 (For he had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For oftentimes it had caught him: and he was kept bound with chains, and in fetters; and he brake the bands, and was driven of the devil into the wilderness.)

30 And Jesus asked him, saying, What is thy name? And he said, Legion: because many devils were entered into him.

16—18. Compare Mark 4: 21—25.
19—21. Compare Matt. 12: 46—50. Mark 3: 31—35. *For the press;* on account of the crowd.

22—25. Compare Matt. 8: 23—27. Mark 4: 36—41.
26—40. Compare Matt. 8: 28—34. Mark 5: 1—21.

31 And they besought him, that he would not command them to go out into the deep.

32 And there was there a herd of many swine feeding on the mountain; and they besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them. And he suffered them.

33 Then went the devils out of the man, and entered into the swine: and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the lake, and were choked.

34 When they that fed *them* saw what was done, they fled, and went and told *it* in the city and in the country.

35 Then they went out to see what was done; and came to Jesus, and found the man out of whom the devils were departed, sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind: and they were afraid.

36 They also which saw *it*, told them by what means he that was possessed of the devils was healed.

37 Then the whole multitude of the country of the Gadarenes round about, besought him to depart from them; for they were taken with great fear. And he went up into the ship, and returned back again.

38 Now, the man out of whom the devils were departed, besought him that he might be with him. But Jesus sent him away, saying,

39 Return to thine own house, and show how great things God hath done unto thee. And he went his way and published throughout the whole city, how great things Jesus had done unto him.

40 And it came to pass, that, when Jesus was returned, the people *gladly* received him: for they were all waiting for him.

41 And behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:

42 For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went, the people thronged him.

43 And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,

44 Came behind *him* and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanched.

45 And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter, and they that were with him, said, Master, the multitude throng thee, and press *thee*, and sayest thou, Who touched me?

46 And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.

31. *Into the deep;* strictly, in accordance with the original, *into the abyss;* that is, the abyss of woe, the world of punishment. Compare Matt. 8: 29. Mark 5: 7.

41—56. Compare Matt. 9: 18—26. Mark 5: 22—43.

47 And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

49 While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's *house*, saying to him, Thy daughter is dead: trouble not the Master.

50 But when Jesus heard *it*, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.

51 And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

52 And all wept and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not: she is not dead, but sleepeth.

53 And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

54 And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.

55 And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat.

56 And her parents were astonished: but he charged them that they should tell no man what was done.

CHAPTER IX.

THEN he called his twelve disciples together, and gave them power and authority over all devils, and to cure diseases.

2 And he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, and to heal the sick.

3 And he said unto them, Take nothing for *your* journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.

4 And whatsoever house ye enter into, there abide, and thence depart.

5 And whosoever will not receive you, when ye go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feet for a testimony against them.

6 And they departed, and went through the towns, preaching the gospel, and healing every where.

7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was done by him: and he was perplexed, because it was said of some, that John was risen from the dead;

8 And of some, that Elias had appeared; and of others, that one of the old prophets was risen again.

9 And Herod said, John have I beheaded; but who is this of whom I hear such things? And he desired to see him.

10 And the apostles, when they were returned, told him all

CHAPTER IX.

1—6. Compare Matt. 10: 1—15. Mark 6: 7—13.

7—9. Compare Matt. 14: 1, 2. Mark 6: 14—16.

10—17. Compare Matt. 14: 13—21. Mark 6: 30—44. John 6: 1—14.

that they had done. And he took them, and went aside privately into a desert place, belonging to the city called Bethsaida.

11 And the people, when they knew *it*, followed him: and he received them, and spake unto them of the kingdom of God, and healed them that had need of healing.

12 And when the day began to wear away, then came the twelve, and said unto him, Send the multitude away, that they may go into the towns and country round about, and lodge, and get victuals: for we are here in a desert place.

13 But he said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they said, We have no more but five loaves and two fishes; except we should go and buy meat for all this people.

14 (For they were about five thousand men.) And he said to his disciples, Make them sit down by fifties in a company.

15 And they did so, and made them all sit down.

16 Then he took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude.

17 And they did eat, and were all filled: and there was taken up of fragments that remained to them twelve baskets.

18 And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him; and he asked them, saying, Who say the people that I am?

19 They, answering, said, John the Baptist; but some *say*, Elias; and others *say*, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20 He said unto them, But who say ye that I am? Peter, answering, said, The Christ of God.

21 And he straitly charged them, and commanded *them* to tell no man that thing,

22 Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests, and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

23 And he said to *them* all, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24 For whosoever will save his life, shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

25 For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

26 For whosoever shall be ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in *his* Father's, and of the holy angels.

27 But I tell you of a truth,

18—27. Compare Matt. 16: 13—28. Mark 8: 27—38. 9: 1.

20. *The Christ of God;* the anointed one of God, the Lord's Messiah. See on 2: 26.

there be some standing here which shall not taste of death till they see the kingdom of God.

28 And it came to pass, about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter, and John, and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

29 And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment *was* white *and* glistering.

30 And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

31 Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33 And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.

34 While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35 And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.

36 And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. And they kept *it* close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

37 And it came to pass, that on the next day, when they were come down from the hill, much people met him.

38 And behold, a man of the company cried out, saying, Master, I beseech thee look upon my son: for he is mine only child.

39 And lo, a spirit taketh him, and he suddenly crieth out; and it teareth him that he foameth again, and bruising him, hardly departeth from him.

40 And I besought thy disciples to cast him out, and they could not.

41 And Jesus, answering, said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you, and suffer you? Bring thy son hither.

42 And as he was yet a coming, the devil threw him down, and tare *him*. And Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the child, and delivered him again to his father.

43 And they were all amazed at the mighty power of God. But while they wondered every one at all things which Jesus did, he said unto his disciples,

44 Let these sayings sink down into your ears: for the Son of man shall be delivered into the hands of men.

28—36. Compare Matt. 17: 1—9. Mark 9: 2—10.

37—45. Compare Matt. 17: 14—23. Mark 9: 14—32.

45 But they understood not this saying, and it was hid from them, that they perceived it not: and they feared to ask him of that saying.

46 Then there arose a reasoning among them, which of them should be greatest.

47 And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a child, and set him by him,

48 And said unto them, Whosoever shall receive this child in my name, receiveth me; and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth him that sent me; for he that is least among you all, the same shall be great.

49 And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us.

50 And Jesus said unto him, Forbid *him* not: for he that is not against us, is for us.

51 And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he steadfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem,

52 And sent messengers before his face: and they went and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him.

53 And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem.

54 And when his disciples James and John saw *this*, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?

55 But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of.

56 For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save *them*. And they went to another village.

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45 *It was hid*, &c. It was to them an obscure saying, and they did not apprehend it. It was so different from what they had been in the habit of expecting in reference to the Messiah, that it appeared to them like a very dark saying.

46—50. Compare Matt. 18: 1—5. Mark 9: 33—41.

51. *Received up;* that is, into heaven. Compare Acts 1: 11, 22. ‖ *He steadfastly set his face;* he resolved.

52. *The Samaritans.* See on Matt. 10: 5.

53. *Because his face was as though he would go*, &c. That is, because he was travelling, &c. So far did the people of this Samaritan village carry their dislike of the Jews, that, because Jesus wished only for a temporary accommodation among them on his way to Jerusalem, they refused to receive him.

54. *As Elias did.* See 2 Kings 1: 10, 12.

56. *Men's lives.* The word rendered *lives* has the twofold signification of *life here* and *life hereafter*. Hence, in reference to the suggestion of James and John as to the natural life of these Samaritans, Jesus could appropriately speak of his having come to save men. It was no part of his office to destroy men's lives; he came to save men, that is, from eternal death. Hence it would not be suitable that he should take the attitude of vengeance, and destroy men. As if he had said, The Messiah comes not as a destroyer, but as a Saviour. ‖ *And they went*, &c. Jesus himself acted on the spirit of his direction to the disciples, mentioned in Matt. 10: 23.

OBSERVE, 1. How prone to ill-will

57 And it came to pass, that as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

58 And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes, and birds of the air *have* nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay *his* head.

59 And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

60 Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God.

61 And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell which are at home at my house.

62 And Jesus said unto him, No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

CHAPTER X.

AFTER these things, the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city, and place, whither he himself would come.

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are some men, and by how unjustifiable causes is it sometimes excited! v. 53.

2. How ready is a spirit of resentment to show itself! and how injurious methods does it prompt in order to obtain satisfaction! v. 54.

3. How lovely was the temper of Christ! v. 55. Compare Matt. 5: 44—48. Luke 6: 35, 36. Rom. 12: 19—21.

57—60. Compare Matt. 8: 19—22.

61. *Let me first go bid them farewell, &c.* The person here spoken of manifested a spirit of procrastination, not being willing at once to leave all from obedience to the Messiah, and practically to acknowledge the Messiah's right to instant and constant obedience. This spirit Jesus rebuked, and showed that there must be an entire preference of his service to every other claim; that there must be no withdrawing from his service. His claims must be regarded as supreme; every thing must be considered as inferior to those claims.

62. *Having put his hand to the plough, &c.* Such was the instrument then used in ploughing, and such the manner of performing the work, that a person's eye must be steadily fixed, else he could not perform the work; he would be unfit for it. So, if a person proposes to follow the Messiah, he must make the Messiah's service his supreme and uniform object of regard. If he allows other objects to divert his mind, and to interfere with the Messiah's claims, he betrays the absence of that supreme love which the Messiah justly demands. Nothing, however dear, must be allowed to turn his mind from the Messiah. ‖ *Is fit for the kingdom of God;* is fit for service pertaining to the Messiah's reign. The reason is, that in reality such a person's heart is not devoted to the Messiah; it is still fastened on other objects than those pertaining to the Saviour's work.

Let us INQUIRE, Do *we* practically give to religion the first place in our hearts? Are we disposed to obey Christ *now* and *always?* Compare Luke 14: 26, 27. Matt. 10: 37.

CHAPTER X.

1. *Other seventy also;* seventy others. There were among the Saviour's hearers and attendants others,

2 Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly *is* great, but the laborers *are* few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest.

3 Go your ways: behold, I send you forth as lambs among wolves.

4 Carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.

5 And into whatsoever house ye enter, first say, Peace *be* to this house.

6 And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it: if not, it shall turn to you again.

7 And in the same house remain, eating and drinking such things as they give: for the laborer is worthy of his hire. Go not from house to house.

8 And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you.

9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

10 But into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you not, go your ways out into the streets of the same, and say,

11 Even the very dust of your city, which cleaveth on us, we do wipe off against you: notwithstanding, be ye sure of this, that the kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

12 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.

13 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon, which have been done in you, they had a great while ago repented, sitting in sackcloth and ashes.

14 But it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment, than for you.

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besides the twelve apostles, who had received special benefit from his instructions, and whom he taught more privately. See Mark 4 : 10. From among such attendants, doubtless, he selected the seventy here mentioned.

2. Compare Matt. 9 : 37, 38. The saying in this verse was probably repeated by the Saviour on different occasions.

3. Compare Matt. 10 : 16.

4. *Carry, &c.* Compare Matt. 10 : 9, 10. || *Salute no man by the way.* Salutation among the people of the East was of a very formal character, and occupied much time. On such occasions, they would repeat, as often as ten times, the ceremony of grasping hands and kissing, and the inquiries respecting each other's health. They would give special thanks to God, and supplicate for each other all kinds of prosperity. Now, the business on which these disciples were sent was too urgent to be thus delayed. Compare 2 Kings 4 : 29.

5—7. Compare Matt. 10 : 11—13. *Peace be to this house.* Such was a frequent form of salutation. See on Matt. 5 : 47. || *The son of peace;* that is, a person whose character makes it suitable that he should receive the blessing implied in the salutation. See on Matt. 8 : 12. The same idea is expressed in Matt. 10 : 11, 13, by the term *worthy.* || *Go not from house to house.* See on Matt. 10 : 11.

9. *The kingdom of God;* the Messiah's reign on earth. See on Matt. 3 : 2.

10—12. Compare Matt. 10 : 14, 15.

13—15. Compare Matt. 11 : 21—23.

15 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted to heaven, shalt be thrust down to hell.

16 He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me.

17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven.

19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

20 Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.

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16. *Heareth;* hears and receives your message, and acts accordingly.

Our Lord's instructions to the seventy disciples are substantially the same as those before given to the twelve apostles. The employment and the circumstances in each case were much alike.

17. *Returned;* from having gone abroad, according to their Lord's direction. Compare v. 1.

18. *Satan, as lightning, fall from heaven.* A figurative manner of describing the speedy destruction of Satan's power over men. *Lightning* is an emblem of *great quickness of motion; to fall from heaven* signifies *to be thrown down from the seat, and from the exercise, of power.* The idea, then, is, Satan is stripped of his power; the power of the adversary will rapidly fall. Jesus, in a vivid way of speaking, represents himself as beholding this fall. The same figure is used in Is. 14 : 12, in respect to the fall of Babylon, where Babylon is spoken of as the morning-star fallen from heaven.

19. *Serpents and scorpions.* Such noxious animals are emblems of whatever might prove hostile and injurious to the Saviour's cause; and the special care of divine providence was, in this verse, promised to the Saviour's early ministers. The apostle Paul experienced, in a signal manner, this special care of providence. See Acts 28 : 3—6. Compare Ps. 91 : 13. ‖ *The enemy;* Satan, the great enemy of God and man, to whose malign influence is ascribed the opposition which the cause of Christ would encounter. Compare Matt. 13 : 39. Rom. 16 : 20.

20. *Your names are written in heaven.* Allusion is made to ancient practices, in respect to citizenship. The names of citizens were enrolled in a book, and when any persons were admitted to the rights of citizenship, their names were inserted in this list. Thus heaven is spoken of as a city, or a commonwealth, the citizens of which are enrolled in a certain book. The Saviour directed these disciples to rejoice, not so much because they had been specially empowered against evil spirits, as because they were enrolled among the citizens of heaven, and would come to the possession of eternal life.

Remarks. 1. The cause of Christ is destined finally to triumph. v. 18.

2. Opposition to the cause of Christ will be unavailing. v. 19. It always has been, on the whole, unavailing. Though the champions of the cross die, like other men, yet God raises up successors. Though hollow-hearted men may be found among the company of Christ's servants, and may exert a bad influence, yet there will always be those who are "chosen and faithful," by whose labors he will accomplish his designs. Though the cause of Christ may seem, in some individual instances,

21 In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

22 All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and *he* to whom the Son will reveal *him*.

23 And he turned him unto *his* disciples, and said privately, Blessed *are* the eyes which see the things that ye see.

24 For I tell you that many prophets and kings have desired to see those things which *ye see*, and have not seen *them;* and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard *them*.

25 And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

26 He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou?

27 And he, answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself.

28 And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.

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to be overborne, yet, as a whole, it is going on "conquering and to conquer."

3. No external circumstances on earth, not even those which are connected with our Christian profession, should be a principal ground of joy. v. 20.

4. The prospect of an abode in heaven is a most reasonable ground of joy. v. 20. Have *we* that trust in Christ, that love to him, and that spirit of habitual obedience to him, to which the promise of heaven is made?

21, 22. Compare Matt. 11: 25—27.

23, 24. Compare Matt. 13: 16, 17.

25. *Lawyer;* a teacher or expounder of the laws of Moses. See on 7: 30. || *Tempted;* tried him, put his knowledge and skill to the test, and wished to bring him into a dispute and difficulty. Jesus professed to teach the true religion. The doctors of the law, among the Jews, were also professed teachers of religion. One of them now wished to try Jesus on a certain question. || *Master;* here equivalent to *teacher*. || *What shall I do*, &c. This was an inquiry that excited much interest at that time. See Matt. 19: 16. Mark 10: 17. There seems, too, to have been prevalent a belief that there were *certain acts* of obedience which would infallibly secure eternal life, without its being sufficiently considered that *the heart* must be right. See Matt. 22: 36. || *To inherit;* to obtain.

26. *In the law;* strictly, the law of Moses. But here the word is probably to be understood in a large sense, as equivalent to the term *Scriptures*. See Matt. 22: 40.

27. Compare Matt. 22: 37—40.

28. *This do;* cherish such a state of heart, and pursue such a course of conduct. This supreme love to God, producing a cheerful obedience to his will, and having the promise of eternal life, is true piety. It may be well to observe here, that the gospel of Jesus Christ shows us the way by which men, sinful beings, can come to the possession of this supreme love and obedience to God. It is by submission to Christ, springing

29 But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?

30 And Jesus, answering, said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

31 And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

33 But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion *on him*,

34 And went to *him*, and bound up his wounds, pouring

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from a heart renewed by the Holy Spirit. See Rom. 8: 1—4.

29. The word *neighbor*, though used in the Scriptures in the broadest extent of meaning, as equivalent to *another person*, was explained by the Jewish teachers as having a limited meaning; so that they felt at liberty to teach, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. See Matt. 5: 43. There was room, then, in the view of this person, still, for inquiring as to the meaning of the word *neighbor*, in the connection in which it had now been introduced. As the inquiry which he had presented had been answered simply by a reference to the Scriptures, he probably felt a desire for a discussion of the subject, so as to draw out in detail the views of Jesus, who professed to be a teacher. *Willing to justify himself;* wishing to show himself a righteous, a good man; professing a desire to understand the direction, in order that he might live according to its meaning, and obtain eternal life.

30. *And Jesus, answering, said,* &c. The parable which now follows must be explained as an answer to the inquiry, Who is my neighbor? and to this inquiry it is a most appropriate and satisfactory answer. The answer conveyed by the parable is this: *Every* and *any* human being, who is within the reach of your kind regards and kind treatment, is your neighbor, whether he be a special friend, an acquaintance, or a stranger, a foreigner, or even an enemy. *No* human being is to be considered as not entitled to the compassion and kindness required by the precept, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. By selecting a Samaritan, as furnishing assistance to a distressed Jew, who had been neglected by principal religious men of his own nation, this lesson was most happily enforced; for between Jews and Samaritans there was no friendly intercourse. || *To Jericho.* Jericho was about twenty miles, nearly east, from Jerusalem. The road from Jericho to Jerusalem was a very favorable one for robbers. At the present day, it passes through a series of rocky defiles, and the surrounding scenery is of the most gloomy aspect.

31. *By chance;* or, as we say, he happened to be travelling that way. || *A certain priest;* one of the chief religious men of the nation. But, though having the reputation of piety, he wholly neglected his suffering countryman.

32. *A Levite.* The Levites were specially devoted to the service of religion. The tribe of Levi had been set apart for the service of the sanctuary, and for the religious interests of the nation. || *Came and looked on him;* and thus saw the pressing nature of the case.

33. *Samaritan.* See on Matt. 10: 5. John 4: 9.

34. *Oil and wine.* These articles were frequently used for medical purposes. The wounds of the unhappy man needed to be washed, and the

in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 And on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave *them* to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36 Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?

37 And he said, He that showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

38 Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman, named Martha, received him into her house.

39 And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word.

40 But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me.

41 And Jesus answered, and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful, and troubled about many things:

42 But one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her.

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blood to be stanched. The wine of that country would be suitable for that purpose, while, afterwards, the oil would have a soothing tendency. It was customary for persons who were travelling a considerable distance to take with them various articles of necessity and convenience. See Gen. 28 : 18.

35. *The host;* the keeper of the public house.

37. *He that showed mercy, &c.* Thus, without any intricate discussion, Jesus led this doctor of the law to a proper answer, — showing him that the precept requiring love to one's neighbor includes every human being, even though he be a stranger, or belong to a hostile community. The doctor of the law having proposed the question, with the ostensible design of showing himself to be a righteous man, and with the ostensible purpose of acting towards his neighbor according as the discussion respecting the meaning of the word should issue, Jesus then urged on him the practical consequence — *Go and do likewise;* cherish the same disposition which you have commended in this Samaritan; go, practise the principle of true, impartial love to man. Compare 1 John 3 : 17.

Reflections. 1. How lovely is the spirit which the gospel enjoins and inspires! It includes all men within its kind regards, whatever be their external condition.

2. If we would have this genuine, extensive love to our neighbor, we must begin by having supreme love to God, and by conforming ourselves to his holy character.

38. *A certain village;* Bethany. See John 11 : 1. Matt. 21 : 17.

39. *His word;* his instructions.

42. *One thing is needful;* the favor of God, salvation; as is explained by the Saviour's mentioning "*that good part*," namely, eternal life, the blessed portion which will endure forever.

Thus our Lord would discourage an undue solicitude about temporal matters and outward appearances. Our bodies will soon be laid in the grave; the earth and the works therein will be burned up. But our souls are immortal; and there is endless

CHAPTER XI.

AND it came to pass, that as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.

2 And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth.

3 Give us day by day our daily bread.

4 And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.

5 And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves:

6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

7 And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

8 I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

9 And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

10 For every one that asketh,

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glory for the righteous. What, then, does wisdom dictate, as the portion which *we* should choose? 1 John 2: 17. 2 Pet. 3: 11, 13. Rev. 21: 4, 23—27.

CHAPTER XI.

1. *Teach us to pray.* It was common for the Jewish teachers to give a short form of prayer to those whom they instructed. John the Baptist, it seems from this verse, had imitated the practice. Jesus had, also, in the sermon on the mount, given instructions respecting prayer, and a model, to the spirit and manner of which he wished his disciples' prayers to be conformed. See Matt. 6: 5—15. 7: 7—11. But he was not understood as prescribing a particular form of words to be used in prayer. Such a form, probably, was now requested by one of his disciples.

2. *And he said unto them, &c.* He at once recalled to the minds of his disciples the pattern which he had formerly given, being more anxious about the spirit, than about the words or the length of a prayer.

2—4. Compare Matt 6: 9—13.

5. Jesus then proceeded to encourage his disciples in the exercise of prayer, particularly with respect to perseverance and importunity.

7. *Are with me in bed.* That is, my children and I have retired to bed.

8. *Though he will not rise, &c.* If friendship on his part do not excite him to favor his neighbor, yet importunity on the part of his neighbor will prevail. In application to God's hearing the prayers of his people, this illustration is peculiarly strong. God has a love for his children, and is predisposed to hear their prayers and to bestow blessings. And if importunity can prevail over the unwillingness of a man to listen to his neighbor's entreaty, much more will importunate prayer to God be followed by favorable answers. Compare 18: 1—8.

9—13. Compare Matt. 7: 7—1[illegible]

receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

11 If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

13 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?

14 And he was casting out a devil, and it was dumb. And it came to pass when the devil was gone out, the dumb spake; and the people wondered.

15 But some of them said, He casteth out devils through Beelzebub, the chief of the devils.

16 And others, tempting *him*, sought of him a sign from heaven.

17 But he, knowing their thoughts, said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation; and a house *divided* against a house, falleth.

18 If Satan also be divided against himself, how shall his kingdom stand? because ye say that I cast out devils through Beelzebub.

19 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your sons cast *them* out? therefore shall they be your judges.

20 But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.

21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:

22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.

23 He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.

24 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest: and finding none, he saith, I will return unto my house whence I came out.

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12. *A scorpion;* a large venomous insect, found in hot countries among the stones of old walls and in decayed buildings. It has a sting at the extremity of its tail.

13. *The Holy Spirit;* the influences of the Holy Spirit, so indispensable to our salvation. In the language furnished by Matt. 7: 11, our Lord used the expression *good things* — a general phrase, applicable to our temporal and our spiritual concerns. In the language furnished by Luke, the expression is more specific, having particular reference to the soul, as the soul's welfare is of paramount importance.

14—32. Compare Matt. 12: 22—45.

16. *Sought of him a sign from heaven.* The request, mentioned in this verse, is replied to by our Saviour in v. 29. Compare Matt. 12: 38, &c.

20. *The finger of God.* Figurative language, expressing *the power of God.* See Matt. 12: 28.

25 And when he cometh, he findeth *it* swept and garnished.

26 Then goeth he, and taketh *to him* seven other spirits more wicked than himself; and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last *state* of that man is worse than the first.

27 And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed *is* the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked.

28 But he said, Yea, rather blessed *are* they that hear the word of God, and keep it.

29 And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

30 For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.

31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon *is* here.

32 The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas *is* here.

33 No man, when he hath lighted a candle, putteth *it* in a secret place, neither under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that they which come in may see the light.

34 The light of the body is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, thy whole body also is full of light; but when *thine eye* is evil, thy body also *is* full of darkness.

35 Take heed therefore, that the light which is in thee be not darkness.

36 If thy whole body therefore *be* full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light; as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light.

37 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in and sat down to meat.

38 And when the Pharisee

33—36. See Matt. 5: 15. 6: 22, 23. These verses contain several weighty sayings of our Lord, delivered, probably, at different times, but inserted here according to the manner of Luke in other passages. See remarks on 6: 39. This place was probably regarded as a suitable one for recording these sayings, as the general principle contained in them has a similarity to the topic on which our Lord had just been speaking. He had described the people of that generation as neglecting the advantages which had been bestowed on them, and as therefore exposed to condemnation. These verses enforce the principle that knowledge and advantages are bestowed in order to be used, and that sad consequences will result from abusing or neglecting them.

38. *Washed.* The original word here employed is the one which is

saw *it*, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

40 *Ye* fools, did not he that made that which is without, make that which is within also?

41 But rather give alms of such things as ye have; and behold, all things are clean unto you.

42 But woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye tithe mint, and rue, and all manner of herbs, and pass over judgment and the love of God: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

43 Woe unto you, Pharisees! for ye love the uppermost seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

44 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over *them* are not aware *of them*.

45 Then answered one of the lawyers, and said unto him, Master, thus saying, thou reproachest us also.

46 And he said, Woe unto you also, *ye* lawyers! for ye lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and ye yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.

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usually rendered *baptized;* and it expresses that copious use of water for cleansing which the Jewish rules required, when persons had been exposed to a promiscuous crowd, as had been the case at this time with Jesus. See v. 29. For the elucidation of the word in such a connection, see on Mark 7: 4.

39. Compare Matt. 23: 25. *Your inward part;* your hearts. ‖ *Ravening and wickedness;* a rapacious and wicked disposition. See on Matt. 23: 14. 15: 5. Mark 7: 10—12. The thought of the Saviour obviously is, You are anxious for outward purity; but you neglect purity of heart.

40. *Ye fools!* Ignorant, inconsiderate men!

41. *Give alms*, &c. If you would exercise a charitable, benevolent spirit, and employ your property in administering to the necessities of men, you might then regard your possessions as allowed by God to your free enjoyment. ‖ *Clean unto you.* The Jewish law contained very precise directions respecting ceremonial cleanness and uncleanness. Things which in the judgment of the law were unclean, were prohibited to be used; things which were clean according to the law, it was allowable to use. Hence the terms *clean* and *unclean* came to be equivalent to the terms *lawful* and *unlawful.* Now, the Pharisees did not make such a use of their property as God required; instead of devoting a suitable portion of it to relieving the wants of the needy, they had regard to their own convenience and aggrandizement. But if they would lay aside their present selfish disposition, and, under the influence of impartial love to men, would administer to human woes, then they might lawfully enjoy the property which divine providence might put in their possession. Compare 3: 11. 10: 37. 18: 22. 19: 8, 9.

42—44. Compare Matt. 23: 23, 6, 7, 27.

45. *Thou reproachest us also.* The lawyers, that is, teachers of the Mosaic law, were similar in opinions and character to the Pharisees, and by their teaching gave tone to the sentiments of the Pharisees.

46. See Matt. 23: 4.

47 Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them.

48 Truly ye bear witness, that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres.

49 Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some* of them they shall slay and persecute:

50 That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation;

51 From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily, I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.

52 Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.

53 And as he said these things unto them, the scribes and the Pharisees began to urge *him* vehemently, and to provoke him to speak of many things;

54 Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him.

47, 48. See Matt. 23: 29—31. *Ye allow;* ye assent to your fathers' deeds; ye have the same disposition which actuated your fathers in their persecution of the prophets. The similarity between the act of *killing* the prophets and the act of *building sepulchres* for them, led Jesus to declare that they were also similar to their fathers *in their disposition*. Besides, they acknowledged it was *their fathers* that had slain the prophets; and the descendants of those fathers were *their chi'dren*, not only by natural descent, but also by *character*. See on Matt. 23: 29—31, for the meaning of the phrase *to be the son of a person*.

49—51. See on Matt. 23: 34—36. *Said the wisdom of God;* God in his wisdom has said; or, the wisdom of God, speaking by me, has declared.

52. *The key of knowledge.* You, as the professed teachers of the people, ought to unlock for them the treasures of divine knowledge; in other words, ought to impart to them divine knowledge. But, instead of conferring on them this benefit, you withhold it from them; you hinder them from obtaining it. This the teachers of the law, the scribes, did by their opposition to Jesus, and their endeavoring to hinder the people from receiving his instructions. ‖ *Ye entered not in yourselves.* The Messiah's dispensation is here likened to an edifice, into which these religious teachers ought themselves to have entered, and to have encouraged the entrance of the people. But, on the contrary, they entered not themselves, and those who were somewhat disposed to enter, they hindered. That is, they did not themselves receive the doctrines of Christ, nor seek the blessings which he promised; and they did all they could to keep others from receiving his doctrines and blessings. So injurious was their influence on the spiritual condition of the people. Compare Matt. 23: 13.

53. *To provoke him to speak of many things;* to propose ensnaring questions, which they hoped he would answer incautiously.

54. *That they might accuse him.* They framed such questions as, if incautiously or even directly answered, might enable either the Pharisees to set one class of the people against him, or the Sadducees another class, or the Herodians another. Thus they hoped in some way to be able to drav

CHAPTER XII.

IN the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

2 For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known.

3 Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness, shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the house-tops.

4 And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do.

5 But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.

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up an accusation against him, which could be presented either to the Jewish Sanhedrim, or to the Roman governor. Compare Matt. 22: 15, 16, 23, 24.

Reflections. 1. How strong and determined was the opposition of the principal men among the Jews to Jesus! So bent on self-destruction do men sometimes seem to be, that they will not desist from prosecuting their purpose even by methods which they know to be unjustifiable and deceitful. How fatal is the influence of prejudice, ill-will, and supposed self-interest!

2. We cannot but admire the wisdom, benevolence, and undaunted steadiness of Jesus.

3. Let us be careful that true religion be in *our hearts*, influencing our characters and conduct. A fair profession may consist with a corrupt heart. v. 42.

CHAPTER XII.

1. *The leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.* The piety of the Pharisees was a mere pretence; hypocrisy was inwrought into, and pervaded, their characters, as leaven pervades the mass in which it is placed.

2. *For there is nothing covered*, &c. Nothing can be concealed from God. There will be a disclosure of every man's character, under however thick a guise he may think himself concealed.

3. *In the light;—upon the house-tops.* Your most secret communications shall be divulged. House-tops were so constructed as to be very favorable for making a public proclamation. See Matt. 10: 27. By this figurative language, the Saviour conveyed the thought that concealment of one's character and purposes is impossible, and that, therefore, his disciples should sedulously guard against hypocrisy. See Eccles. 12: 14. 1 Cor. 4: 5. 2 Cor. 5: 10. Ps. 139. The words in the second and third verses seem to have been proverbial sayings, which could be happily applied to show the utter uselessness of hypocrisy. In Matt. 10: 26, 27, they appear to be employed in a slightly different application.

How important it was that those earliest ministers of the Saviour, exposed to so many circumstances of trial, should be perfectly sincere, it is scarcely necessary to hint.

4, 5. *Be not afraid*, &c. Constancy in their attachment to Jesus, and in defending his cause, was also demanded of them. They would be exposed to imminent danger, as his disciples. Their best defence against the fear which their dangers might excite, would be a salutary fear of God, whose displeasure would be felt in another world, as well as in this. See Matt. 10: 28.

6 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God?

7 But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

8 Also I say unto you, Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God.

9 But he that denieth me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God.

10 And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven.

11 And when they bring you unto the synagogues, and *unto* magistrates, and powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye shall answer, or what ye shall say:

12 For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say.

13 And one of the company said unto him, Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me.

14 And he said unto him, Man, who made me a judge, or a divider over you?

15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

16 And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully:

17 And he thought within

6—9. Compare Matt. 10: 29—33.

10. Compare Matt. 12: 31, 32. The fatal consequences of renouncing Christ, and of rejecting the claim which he makes on our love and obedience, ought to be considered, by the professed followers and ministers of Christ, as inducements to persevering faithfulness.

11, 12. See Matthew 10: 17—20. *Powers;* rulers.

13. *Speak to my brother*, &c. Perhaps these persons were frequent attendants on the Saviour, and therefore the one who made the request supposed that his brother would readily yield to the direction of Jesus.

14. *Who made me a judge*, &c. Jesus had not been appointed to exercise temporal power, or to administer civil justice, or to settle family disputes. However desirous he might be that, in the present instance, justice might prevail, yet he declined taking any part in the controversy. Such matters belonged to others; and to others he left them, unwilling that his great work of teaching men should be interrupted, or should be hindered by his going beyond his appropriate sphere.

15. The anxiety of this man to obtain earthly good furnished a favorable opportunity for cautioning the people against covetousness, and against seeking bliss from worldly wealth. *A man's life*, &c. Man's happiness in life does not consist in his possessing an abundance of property. However great abundance a man may have, length of life and continuance of happiness do not depend on his abundance. Hence, beware of covetousness.

16. *A parable* The parable was designed to illustrate the thought which Jesus had just expressed.

17. *Bestow;* collect, store away.

himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

18 And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, *and* be merry.

20 But God said unto him, *Thou* fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?

21 So *is* he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.

22 And he said unto his disciples, Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on.

23 The life is more than meat, and the body *is more* than raiment.

24 Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap: which neither have store-house, nor barn; and God feedeth them. How much more are ye better than the fowls?

25 And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?

26 If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest?

27 Consider the lilies how they grow. They toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

28 If then God so clothe the grass, which is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven; how much more *will he clothe* you, O ye of little faith?

29 And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind.

30 For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.

31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added unto you.

32 Fear not, little flock; for

19. *Be merry;* enjoy thyself.

20. *Thy soul shall be required of thee;* thou shalt die.

21. *So is he that layeth up, &c.* By the Saviour's illustration, the lesson was strikingly enforced, that life and happiness do not depend on earthly riches. On the contrary, true bliss consists in spiritual wealth, in possessing richly the favor of God.

22—31. Compare Matt. 6: 25—33. The instructions in these verses are very intimately connected with the subject on which the Saviour had just spoken. Whether they were given by the Saviour in this very connection, or in the sermon on the mount, according to Matthew's representation, or on both these occasions, it is not necessary for us to know, in order to receive the full impression of the truths delivered. They are instructions very happily appropriate to the parable.

25. *Stature.* See on Matt. 6: 27.

26. *That thing which is least;* a very little thing, namely, the adding of a few moments to your life.

30. *Nations of the world;* the Gentiles. Compare Matt. 6: 32.

32. *Little flock.* An affectionate epithet, applied to the company of the

it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

33 Sell that ye have, and give alms: provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth.

34 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

35 Let your loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning;

36 And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that, when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

37 Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily, I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

Saviour's disciples. ‖ *The kingdom;* the blessings of the Messiah's reign, both here and hereafter, but especially hereafter in heaven. The goodness of God, in providing heavenly blessings for the Saviour's followers, was well used as an argument for placing confidence in him respecting all needed blessings on earth.

33, 34. Looking forward to the surpassing blessings of the divine kingdom, the disciples of Christ ought to withdraw their affections from this world, and to use their worldly substance for relieving the wants of others. *Sell, &c.* See on Matthew 19: 21. ‖ *Bags;* purses. ‖ *Which wax not old;* which will not wear out. The expression *bags which wax not old*, is immediately explained by our Saviour as meaning *a treasure in heaven*, which would endure forever. Compare Matt. 6: 19—21

35—48. In these verses, the Saviour inculcated the duty of habitual diligence and watchfulness in the Lord's service, and of habitual readiness to give up an account. He showed the happy consequences of being thus habitually watchful and prepared for his coming, and the certain doom of the unfaithful and negligent.

35. *Loins be girded about.* The outside garment, in the East, was loose and flowing, and, unless it was girded around the body, would be an impediment when a person wished to prosecute any business with rapidity. Hence girdles were in constant use. *To have the loins girded about*, then, means *to be ready for service.* ‖ *Lights burning.* Feasts and entertainments were held in the evening, and extended into the night. The servants, then, at home, waiting for their master, must have lamps burning. ‖ *Wedding.* The original term is applicable to any entertainment.

37. *Blessed;* happy. ‖ *The lord*, their master. ‖ *He shall gird himself, &c.* It appears from Deut. 12: 17, 18, and 15: 11, 12, that the Jews were required to treat their servants with great kindness, and to consider them, as well as their own children, entitled to participate in their feasts. It was also customary for the guests at an entertainment to carry home various articles of food, such as had been used at the entertainment, as a mark of respect and affection for those who had remained at home, servants as well as others. The servants are here represented by our Saviour as being in attendance, and ready for their master's coming. As a token of his regard for them, and as rewarding their faithfulness, their master bids them take *their* part of the entertainment, and cheerfully welcomes them to their meal; — this, too, he does in a manner peculiarly honorable to his faithful servants. The idea, then, in reference to the Messiah, is, he will *signally honor* his faithful servants.

38 And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants.

39 And this know, that if the good man of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

40 Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

41 Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them their* portion of meat in due season?

43 Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

44 Of a truth I say unto you, That he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

45 But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

46 The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

47 And that servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*.

48 But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

49 I am come to send fire on

38. *Second watch, &c.* See on Mark 13: 35.

39, 40. Compare Matt. 24: 42—44.

41. *Unto us, or even to all?* Peter wished to know whether the parable had respect to the apostles in their official capacity, or whether it was intended for general application.

42—46. To Peter's inquiry our Lord did not return a direct answer, as the inquiry was not of much practical importance. He immediately proceeded still further and more particularly to enforce the necessity of watchfulness and faithfulness on the part of every one to whom a trust had been committed. See Mark 13: 37. Compare Matt. 24: 45—51.

46. *The unbelievers;* more exactly, *the unfaithful.*

47, 48. The punishment which will be awarded to the unfaithful, will hold a just proportion to their different degrees of guilt; and the guilt will be measured by the advantages which were enjoyed of knowing and doing the Lord's will. To *all* men, then, the illustration in the parable is applicable, whether they have received a highly important trust or a less important one; whether they have enjoyed abundant advantages or few. *He that knew not;* that is, comparatively; he whose knowledge was less than others had received.

49. *Fire.* This word is an emblem of the *discord and strife* which would be excited in consequence of the Saviour's having come. He and his cause would be an occasion of bitte

the earth, and what will I, if it be already kindled?

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.

54 And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

55 And when *ye see* the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

56 *Ye* hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky, and of the earth; but how is it, that ye do not discern this time?

57 Yea, and why even of

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discord among men. ‖ *And what will I.* The word translated *what* is also used as an interjection, signifying *how*. The word translated *will* has also the meaning *wish*, or *desire*. Hence the idea is, *How I wish!* ‖ *If it be already kindled.* The Greek idiom here employed is equivalent to our more direct way of speaking — *that it was already kindled.* Our Lord, then, may be regarded as saying, How I wish that it [the fire] was already kindled! The language is that of strong emotion, expressing an earnest desire that his cause was established; that the tumults and sorrows connected with its establishment were already commenced, and that the triumph was hastening on to which it was destined; as if he had said, Since my righteous cause cannot be established without discord and confusion, come discord — O that it might come at once, and be past!

50. *A baptism to be baptized with;* overwhelming sorrows to be endured. Compare Matt. 20 : 22. ‖ *How am I straitened;* perplexed, subjected to distress. The Saviour was expecting severe suffering; and in anticipation of it, he endured much mental anguish. At the same time, knowing that that suffering was necessary for accomplishing the work which he had undertaken, that it was a part of the plan in reference to which he was acting, he would not shrink from it; but rather, with the feelings of one who contemplated *the end*, would desire its approach and its endurance, so that the end might be gained. At the same time, he felt a dread at the overwhelming sorrows which he must encounter. Our Lord, doubtless, anticipated, with mingled emotions, the sufferings which he was to endure. The triumph which he would achieve, and the assured success of his cause, sustained him and led him to welcome every sorrow which it was necessary to endure; yet the thought of suffering, in itself considered, and of suffering *such* sorrow, was very painful. Painful, however, as it was, he cherished a most submissive spirit. See Matt. 26 : 39. Heb. 5 : 7, 8. 12 : 2.

51—53. See Matt. 10 : 34—36.

54—56. Compare Matt. 16 : 2, 3. *A cloud rise out of the west*, &c. Compare 1 Kings 18 : 44.

56. *Discern this time?* How is it that ye do not rightly conclude these to be the times of the Messiah? that ye do not rightly judge of these times?

57. *Why even of yourselves*, &c. How is it that your own sense of

yourselves judge ye not what is right?

58 When thou goest with thine adversary to the magistrate, *as thou art* in the way, give diligence that thou mayest be delivered from him; lest he hale thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and the officer cast thee into prison.

59 I tell thee, thou shalt not depart thence, till thou hast paid the very last mite.

CHAPTER XIII.

THERE were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

2 And Jesus, answering, said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?

3 I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

4 Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

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right and wrong does not lead you to a just conclusion respecting the present times?

58, 59. Compare Matt. 5: 25, 26.

CHAPTER XIII.

1. *Whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.* That is, who had been put to death by Pilate's orders, while they were offering sacrifices. Respecting the fact here alluded to, namely, the slaughter of certain Galileans while engaged in sacrificing, we have no historical records. But the fact is in accordance with the known character of the Galileans, and with the manner in which seditious attempts were repressed by the Roman power. The Galileans were very forward in promoting sedition; and as the Jewish festivals brought people from all parts of the country to Jerusalem, it is probable, that, during one of those festivals, Pilate, having received information of some seditious movements by certain Galileans, sent an armed force, and, in a summary way, took vengeance on them while they were at the very altar. This circumstance was related, probably, to draw forth from Jesus some expression of opinion either respecting the conduct of Pilate, or respecting the characters of those who had been slain. Instead of expressing an opinion on either of these topics, and thus of only gratifying curiosity, or giving some unfriendly persons occasion to accuse him, he embraced the opportunity of warning them to repent, and of correcting a mistaken view of calamities, as sent by divine providence.

2. *Sinners above all the Galileans.* The notion seems to have been cherished, that peculiar calamities are a proof of peculiar guilt in the persons who suffer.

3. *Nay.* It is not true that the immediate and the greatest sufferers by any calamity are the greatest sinners, however true it may be that the calamities and sorrows of this world originate from the displeasure of God against sin. ‖ *Likewise perish;* perish in like manner. That is, you and your victims for sacrifice will perish together — a prediction awfully fulfilled, when, forty years after, their city and temple were demolished, immense multitudes of the nation were destroyed, the blood of many of whom, doubtless, did actually flow with the blood of victims intended for sacrifice.

4. *The tower in Siloam, &c.* The Saviour reminded his hearers of another calamitous event, and drew from it the same instruction. Siloam

5 I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

6 He spake also this parable: A certain *man* had a fig-tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, and found none.

7 Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig-tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?

8 And he, answering, said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung *it:*

9 And if it bear fruit, *well:* and if not, *then* after that thou shalt cut it down.

10 And he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

11 And behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up *herself.*

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was the name of a fountain in the valley by Jerusalem. It is mentioned also in John 9: 7. The tower mentioned might have been on the city walls, just over this fountain. The word rendered *in*, it would be better to render *at;* so that the expression would be, *the tower at Siloam.* The fact referred to by our Lord was one well known at the time, though no particular account of it has reached our times.

5. *Likewise perish;* you will perish in the destruction of your city. Both in this verse and in the third, our Saviour predicted the temporal calamities which would overwhelm the nation if they did not repent, as well as the everlasting ruin which they would bring on themselves. He could not well be understood by his hearers otherwise than as referring to the misery of the impenitent in the future world, as well as to signal temporal calamities; for they had been repeatedly warned that without repentance they could not have eternal life. His hearers, too, regarded the cases produced as those of men who had passed into eternity under the divine indignation. In like manner would they perish if they continued impenitent.

With reference to the condition and prospects of the Jewish nation, Jesus proceeded to speak a parable. The purport of it is, The Jewish nation had enjoyed all needed advantages, but had failed to make suitable returns of love and obedience to God. God would continue his patience a while longer, and increase the means of spiritual culture. If the nation persisted in sin, and was not brought to amendment, it should be destroyed.

7. *These three years.* Fig-trees, that bear at all, have fruit by the time here mentioned. ‖ *Cumbereth it the ground?* Why should it remain? It is a mere incumbrance, and makes the ground it occupies wholly unprofitable.

PRACTICAL HINT. Though the parable contained in verses 6—9 was spoken with special reference to the Jewish nation, let US not fail to apply it to ourselves, and to INQUIRE, Are we making those returns of love and obedience to God which our advantages justly demand? And let the fate of the Jewish nation be a constant warning of the sad doom which awaits those who, surrounded by advantages, abuse or neglect them.

11. *A spirit of infirmity.* The account given of this case does not render it plain that the infirmity was occasioned, properly speaking, by the influence of an evil spirit. The lan-

12 And when Jesus saw her, he called *her to him*, and said unto her, Woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity.

13 And he laid *his* hands on her: and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

14 And the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because that Jesus had healed on the Sabbath-day, and said unto the people, There are six days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath-day.

15 The Lord then answered him, and said, *Thou* hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or *his* ass from the stall, and lead *him* away to watering?

16 And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath-day?

17 And when he had said these things, all his adversaries were ashamed: and all the people rejoiced for all the glorious things that were done by him.

18 Then said he, Unto what is the kingdom of God like? and whereunto shall I resemble it?

19 It is like a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden, and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.

20 And again he said, Whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God?

21 It is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

22 And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem.

23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,

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guage in this verse is very similar to that in Rom. 11: 8,—"a spirit of slumber,"—and may simply describe this woman as having a special infirmity, or bodily weakness.

12. *Loosed;* freed.

13. *He laid his hands on her.* An act frequently performed in cases of healing. See Matt. 9: 18. Mark 8: 25. 16: 18.

14. *Because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath-day.* Compare Matt. 12: 10. Mark 3: 2.

16. *Whom Satan hath bound.* It was common to ascribe to the power of Satan various sufferings, which yet were acknowledged as occurring in the ordinary providence of God. ‖ *This bond;* this affliction, by which her limbs are bound so that they cannot perform their office. The argument of the Saviour, presented in the 15th verse, was a convincing one, and was instantly felt to be so, both by his opponents and by the people. They at once felt how much more deserving of needed attentions on the Sabbath was a human being, a daughter of Abraham, than an ox or an ass. Compare Matt. 12: 12. Mark 3: 4.

18—21. See Matt. 13: 31—33.

23. *Few that be saved?* That is, *that will be saved.* The particular occasion on which this question was proposed is not mentioned. The proverbial saying employed by our Lord, according to Matt. 20: 16, and 22: 14—*Many are called, but few are*

24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.

25 When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:

26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.

27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all *ye* workers of iniquity.

28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you *yourselves* thrust out.

29 And they shall come from the east, and *from* the west, and from the north, and *from* the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

30 And behold, there are last, which shall be first; and there are first, which shall be last.

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chosen — might have suggested the inquiry. It appears, too, from some Jewish writings, that this very question was sometimes agitated among the Jewish teachers. It might have been proposed to our Lord from curiosity merely. But he gave no answer to the point proposed, as it was a topic of curiosity, rather than of practical bearing. He employed the inquiry as an occasion for presenting to all a solemn exhortation to seek for themselves admission into heaven.

24. *Strive.* The term employed in the original is a very forcible one, drawn from the contests of wrestlers, and is equivalent to our expression "*strain every nerve.*" In the exhortation here commenced, our Lord presented the state of the blessed in heaven under the figure of an entertainment in a mansion to which there was access by a narrow gate. At this entertainment would be all the ancient worthies. Up to a certain point of time, guests would be entering, and would be welcomed; but, when that time should be past, and the joys of the entertainment actually begun, the master of the house, the Messiah himself, would close his door against the admission of any others. Those who should apply after that time would not be admitted. This last thought was the precise one which our Lord designed to enforce, namely, every one ought to strive for salvation while it is attainable: by and by, it will be too late; the opportunity for securing admission into heaven will have gone by. ‖ *Strait gate.* See on Matt. 7: 13. ‖ *Shall not be able.* Because it will be too late.

25. *I know you not;* I acknowledge you not as my friends.

26. *We have eaten and drunk in thy presence;* we have been on intimate terms with thee, as thy friends.

28. *Weeping and gnashing of teeth;* keen anguish. See on Matt. 8: 12. ‖ *In the kingdom of God;* the state of the blessed, the consummation of the Messiah's reign. ‖ *Thrust out;* rejected. See on Matt. 8: 11, 12.

29. *From the east,* &c. The blessed company of heaven shall be gathered from every quarter, not merely from one nation.

30. *There are last,* &c. Then it will be seen that many who on earth held a low place as to esteem and honor, shall occupy a high place, shall receive marks of distinguished favor and honor, in being admitted into heaven. On the other hand, many who on earth have occupied the highest places, must take a very low

31 The same day there came certain of the Pharisees, saying unto him, Get thee out, and depart hence; for Herod will kill thee.

32 And he said unto them, Go ye and tell that fox, Behold, I cast out devils, and I do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third *day* I shall be perfected.

place; the honors they have had on earth must be exchanged for "shame and everlasting contempt"—a solemn warning to Jews, who prided themselves on standing high in the favor of God; and a solemn warning, it may be added, to every one who is held in esteem, whether in the church or in the world.

Topics for Inquiry. 1. Are we *striving* for entrance into heaven, while the time for preparation continues? vs. 24, 25.

2. Are we relying on an external profession, and on external advantages, as our ground of hope for admission into heaven? vs. 26, 27.

3. Can we endure the thought of not being admitted into the society of the holy and excellent in heaven? v. 28.

4. Have we evidence that we shall belong to the countless multitude that will dwell in heaven? v. 29. Compare Rev. 7: 9, 10. 21: 27. 22: 11, 14.

31. *There came certain of the Pharisees*, &c. The Herod mentioned in this verse was Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee and Perea. See Luke 3: 1. Jesus had made Galilee the principal scene of his labors, and had acquired much respect and popularity there. Herod probably feared that the Galileans, who were very prone to seditious movements, might, through their regard for Jesus, be drawn into some political schemes adverse to his interests. He therefore wished, in a peaceable manner, so as not to arouse the indignation of the populace, to secure the removal of Jesus beyond his territories. For this purpose, he probably employed some of the Pharisees to inform Jesus, under the pretence of friendship, that the tetrarch was determined on taking his life, if he should remain in Galilee. The Pharisees were, doubtless, quite willing to be employed on such a message, as their evil designs against Jesus could be prosecuted with more hope of success in Judea, where the principal men of the nation resided.

32. *That fox.* The fox is an emblem of craft and cunning. Our Lord thus characterized Herod as being a crafty man in sending such a message, and let the persons who brought the message know that he was well acquainted with Herod's character; that he saw through Herod's artifice in sending such a threat, and that he had no fear of Herod's taking his life. Such was the usual manner of speaking among the Jews, that the application of this epithet to Herod would not be viewed in the light of a contemptuous expression, or of defiance; but would be regarded simply as an honest, fearless declaration of Herod's known character. Herod was, indeed, a crafty politician. For thirty years, he contrived to maintain himself in power, keeping on good terms with men of most diverse characters and interests. ‖ *I cast out devils*, &c. The purport of the reply which Jesus sent back to Herod is, I am engaged in a work which ought not to excite alarm in your breast. It is no political scheme in which I am engaged, but a work of benevolence, relieving the miseries of the people; and this work will occupy but a short time. A few days more, and I shall have finished the work in which I am occupied. Herod, then, needs not cherish any apprehensions of danger from me. ‖ *To-day and to-morrow*, &c. That is, *a short time.* A similar use of such language may be seen in Hosea 6: 2. ‖ *I shall be perfected.* The original word here used may be ren-

33 Nevertheless, I must walk to-day and to-morrow, and the *day* following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.

34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen *doth gather* her brood under *her* wings, and ye would not!

35 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. And verily, I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until *the time* come when ye shall say, Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

CHAPTER XIV.

AND it came to pass, as he went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath-day, that they watched him.

2 And behold, there was a certain man before him which had the dropsy.

3 And Jesus, answering, spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath-day?

4 And they held their peace. And he took *him*, and healed him, and let him go:

5 And answered them, saying, Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the Sabbath-day?

6 And they could not answer him again to these things.

7 And he put forth a parable to those which were bidden, when he marked how they chose out the chief rooms; saying unto them,

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dered, *I shall have finished*, that is, my work.

33. *Nevertheless;* notwithstanding this message from Herod. ‖ *I must walk;* I must go on performing my work. ‖ *To-day*, &c.; during the short time which remains. ‖ *It cannot be*, &c. As if the Saviour had said, It is not in Galilee that prophets have usually been put to death; it is the city of Jerusalem which has signalized itself by hatred and persecution of holy men; it is in Jerusalem that the murder of a prophet might be expected. The language here used was a very strong method of expressing our Lord's sense of the guilty character of Jerusalem. He did not mean to say it was a thing *utterly impossible* that a prophet should be put to death elsewhere than in Jerusalem; for John the Baptist and others had been put to death elsewhere. But he meant to show that Jerusalem had an awful preëminence in guilt; so much so, that it could hardly be expected that violence would be done to a prophet elsewhere, and a prophet might feel safe from the danger of a violent death, if he were only out of Jerusalem.

34, 35. See Matt. 23: 37—39.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. *Chief Pharisees;* principal men among the Pharisees. ‖ *To eat bread;* to take a meal.

3. *Is it lawful*, &c. See on Matt. 12: 10.

5. *An ass or an ox fallen into a pit.* For a similar argument, see Matt. 12: 11.

7. *A parable.* This word here signifies a grave or weighty saying, in the form of an illustration. ‖ *Bidden;* invited. ‖ *The chief rooms.* See on Matt. 23: 6.

8 When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him;

9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room.

10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee.

11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

12 Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor *thy* rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee.

13 But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind;

14 And thou shalt be blessed: for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

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8. *A wedding*. See on 12: 36. ‖ *Highest room*. See on the preceding verse.

10. *Worship;* esteem, applause. The word *worship* was used, when our translation of the Scriptures was made, with reference to men, as well as to God.

11. *He that humbleth himself*, &c. True humility is the surest qualification for true dignity — a sentiment applicable to our concerns both with man and with God. Compare Matt. 23: 11, 12.

12. *Him that bade him*. Compare v. 1. ‖ *A dinner or a supper*. The supper was the principal meal among the Jews, taken when the heat of the day was past. The word translated *dinner* was applied to a meal which varied with circumstances, being a comparatively slight refreshment, taken a short time before noon, sometimes shortly after noon, and sometimes even in the morning. ‖ *Call not thy friends*, &c. Invite not thy friends, and relatives, and rich neighbors, *exclusively*, to enjoy thy kind regards and hospitality. Let not acts of kindness be *confined* to them; because they have it in their power to repay the favor, and their return of similar favors will, if a person's benevolence be of this restricted character, be all the recompense he will receive.

13. *Call the poor*, &c. On the contrary, extend your liberality to the poor and distressed, thus exercising true compassion and impartial benevolence. Let your benevolence be such as will embrace those who cannot bestow on you similar tokens of favor; let it be exercised, not with any selfish view to your own advantage, but rather with an honest, simple view to the happiness of those who are in distress. Compare Matt. 5: 43—48.

14. *Thou shalt be blessed;* thou shalt then be truly happy. ‖ *At the resurrection of the just;* in the future state of the righteous.

In these instructions, our Lord did not *absolutely forbid* our entertaining of relatives and rich friends; but he forbade our treating *them exclusively* with special kindness. He directed that our benevolent regards be extended to others, as well as to our im-

15 And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed *is* he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God.

16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many:

17 And sent his servant at supper-time, to say to them that were bidden, Come, for all things are now ready.

18 And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused.

19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused.

20 And another said, I have married a wife: and therefore I cannot come.

21 So that servant came, and showed his lord these things. Then the master of the house, being angry, said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets

mediate relatives and our wealthy friends, and particularly to the friendless and distressed, from whom no compensation could be expected. Our benevolence and kind deeds ought to have reference to strangers, to the poor and wretched, *rather than* to those who are our relatives, and those who are able to compensate us. Thus the sincerity of our benevolence will be more certain. The Saviour's remarks were directed against the customs of the Pharisees, whose benevolence was restricted within very narrow limits, not including the really poor and wretched, except occasionally, when, in public (see Matt. 6 : 2), they could attract notice by giving alms. The image of *a dinner* or *a supper*, that is, *an entertainment*, was employed, because Jesus was then present at a meal with others, who had been invited by the Pharisee, and because, on this very occasion, he had seen a manifestation of the ostentatious spirit of the Pharisees. The whole passage is in entire accordance with Matt. 5 : 44—48. Luke 10 : 29—37.

15. *Eat bread;* partake of entertainments; or, simply, eat and drink, that is, *live.* ‖ *In the kingdom of God;* in the Messiah's reign. The whole expression amounts to this: Happy he who shall live in the Messiah's days. Such a person would enjoy distinguished privileges and hopes.

16. *Then said he, &c.* Our Lord proceeded to show that, however the Jews professed to think highly of the Messiah's reign, and to desire it most ardently, yet they would not receive the Messiah; they would undervalue the blessings which his reign was intended to bestow, and consider them less worthy of their regard than the common affairs of life. He showed that others, whom they greatly disesteemed, would be admitted to those blessings, while they themselves would be rejected. For this purpose, he spoke a parable, likening the blessings of the Messiah's reign to the enjoyments at an entertainment —a mode of representation in common use at that time. See Matt. 8 : 11, 12. 22 : 2—13. Luke 13 : 25—29.

17. *Sent—at supper-time.* See on Matt. 22 : 3.

18. *To make excuse.* The excuses which are mentioned are such as plainly indicated, on the part of those who made them, a slighting both of the entertainment and of him who had prepared it. Real friends would never make such excuses. The excuses were a mere pretence to cover up the dislike which the persons felt, and thus they manifested a spirit worthy to be frowned on.

and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind.

22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room.

23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled.

24 For I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden, shall taste of my supper.

25 And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them,

26 If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

27 And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

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23. *Hedges;* paths made, by means of hedges, across vineyards and other cultivated places. ‖ *Compel;* invite with the utmost urgency.

24. *None of those men — shall eat of my supper.* Thus the parable very strikingly showed the rejection of the Jews, and the bestowing of the Messiah's blessings on others.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION. This parable is full of INTEREST TO US. 1. The blessings of the gospel are proposed to us — pardon and eternal life; and the claims of God on our love and obedience are forcibly urged. v. 16.

2. We are disposed to excuse ourselves from obeying the commands of God, and are, consequently, in danger of failing to obtain the blessings which he proposes. The excuses which men make are of a wholly unsatisfactory character, arising from the absence of love to God, from a preference of their own will to his authority, and from a preference of earthly enjoyments and cares to spiritual and everlasting blessings. These excuses often consist in a perversion of God's providential arrangements and mercies, and in an inordinate attachment to things which in themselves are lawful and even necessary. Hence the spirit that prompts us to make excuses in respect to the service of God, ought to be carefully watched and strenuously resisted. vs. 18—20.

3. If we persist in making excuses, we shall be inevitably shut out from heaven. v. 24.

4. If *we* are shut out from heaven, the goodness of God in providing so blessed a world for the eternal happiness of holy beings will not be useless; heaven will, notwithstanding, be abundantly furnished with holy beings and recipients of the divine favor. v. 23. The loss will be wholly our own. And O how unspeakable the gain of those who, while on earth, wisely lay hold on eternal life! Can WE be contented, if we have reason to fear that we do not belong to that company?

26. *Hate not his father*, &c. This very strong expression is to be understood comparatively, as equivalent to the expression, *love in a far less degree;* that is, *love his father*, &c. *far less than he loves me*, or *hate his father*, &c. *in comparison with the love he bears to me*, regarding my claims as superior to the claims of all others, however dear to him those others may be. As a specimen of this comparative use of the word, see on Mark 3 : 4. Compare, also, as to the meaning of the verse, Matt. 10 : 37.

27. See Matt. 10 : 38. Jesus plainly declared, that nothing must be allowed to come into competition with his claims on men's obedience; that his claims must be considered supreme; and that his disciples must

28 For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish *it?*

29 Lest haply after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish *it*, all that behold *it* begin to mock him,

30 Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

31 Or what king going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand?

32 Or else, while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

33 So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple.

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be willing, out of regard to him, to endure all sorts of trials; and to submit, instead of renouncing him, even to the most painful and shameful death. There were prevalent so many erroneous notions respecting the Messiah's designs, and such wrong expectations respecting dignity and bliss on earth, as connected with the Messiah's cause, that a clear statement of what Jesus required in his followers was greatly needed. He made this clear statement, so that every one who might propose to follow him should know on what to calculate, and might carefully examine beforehand whether he was willing to encounter what, in all probability, he would meet; lest, afterwards, he should regret having begun to follow the Messiah, and should bring on himself the condemnation and the shame which those would incur, who, through fear of danger and love of the present world, should renounce the Messiah's cause.

28—30. *For which of you*, &c. The importance of knowing the Messiah's claims thoroughly, of carefully examining one's disposition towards him, and of making an intelligent calculation in regard to the prospect before his followers, Jesus illustrated by what occurs in common life. When a prudent man is proposing to undertake an important matter, he looks at it thoroughly, reflects on his resources, and weighs the probabilities in regard to ultimate success. Unless a man does this, he exposes himself to a failure and to the derision of all who may know him. The same wisdom which prompts a person to enter deliberately, and after due examination of his means, on any important measure, ought to prompt those, who propose to follow the Messiah, to an examination of his claims, and to a comparison of their hearts and purposes with those claims. || *A tower*. The original word sometimes means *a costly edifice*, such as would be furnished with a tower; an expensive mansion.

31. *Or what king*, &c. So a king, proposing hostilities with another king, would naturally take the matter into consideration, and calculate the chances of success, by comparing his own forces with those of the enemy. And if his own forces should be very inferior to those of his enemy, he would consider whether it would be at all likely, that, with his inferior forces, he could overcome the enemy and reduce him to terms.

32. *Or else*, &c. If the king, without this previous reflection and consultation, should rush into hostilities, he would expose himself to the mortification, after having himself begun the war, of suing for peace.

33. *So likewise*, &c. So if a person proposes to become a disciple of Jesus, he ought carefully to consider whether he has such an attachment to the Saviour, and such an estimate of the surpassing glory which will be

34 Salt *is* good: but if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be seasoned?

35 It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; *but* men cast it out. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

CHAPTER XV.

THEN drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him.

given to the Saviour's followers in another world, that he is willing to renounce every earthly good, even life itself, out of regard to Jesus and his cause. ‖ *Forsaketh not all that he hath;* is not willing to abandon every earthly good for my sake. A person who would renounce Christ rather than his temporal possessions cannot be a disciple of Christ. Obedience to Christ must be his controlling principle, to whatever difficulties such obedience shall lead. See on vs. 26, 27. Compare Mark 10: 21.

34. *If the salt have lost his savor,* &c. Having shown the spirit which must characterize his followers, and the necessity of careful examination by the standard which he had proposed, Jesus further enforced his statements by an illustration drawn from salt, which had lost its saltness. See Matt. 5: 13. As such salt would be wholly valueless, so a man who, without the spirit which he had enjoined, should profess to be his follower, would be wholly valueless as to the great purposes for which Jesus had come. ‖ *Cast it out;* throw it away.

Reflection. A profession of religion is a very serious transaction. Much self-examination and prayer should precede it. Yet if you are conscious of loving the Saviour and his cause; if, so far as you can honestly judge, you prefer the Saviour's cause to every other interest, and out of regard to that preference are willing to renounce earthly enjoyments and ease—you ought not to be deterred by a sense of your weakness. "He gives power" to them who feel that they "have no might." Your very sense of weakness will prove your strongest security, if it leads you to trust in the Lord; "for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength."

CHAPTER XV.

1. *Publicans and sinners.* It would seem that many of the people to whom these epithets were given, had become deeply interested in our Saviour's teaching, and many, doubtless, had derived spiritual benefit from his instructions. See Matt. 21: 28—32. They had become truly penitent, and were seeking still further spiritual improvement. Jesus encouraged their attendance on his instructions, and was so frequently in their society, for the sake of instructing and reforming them, and for the sake of confirming in the truth those who were really penitent, that it became a matter of remark among the Pharisees. See Matt. 9: 10.

The publicans were odious to the Pharisees and to the Jews in general, on account of their employment, and of the extortion which many of them practised. See Introductory Explanations, in the first volume, page xvii. Many of this class had become true penitents through the instructions of John the Baptist and of Jesus; and it was suitable that Jesus should continue to instruct such, and be frequently among them, as a promising portion of his hearers. But the Pharisees would not abandon their prejudices against them, and would doubtless dislike them still more in consequence of their becoming attached to Jesus.

Those who are denominated *sinners* were persons who were not careful to observe the outward religious forms of the strict Jews. Many of them were doubtless known to be vicious. Among these, also, Jesus found some fruits of his labors and of the labors of John the Baptist. They looked to Jesus as their teacher and

2 And the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them.

3 And he spake this parable unto them, saying,

4 What man of you having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?

5 And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing.

6 And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbors, saying unto them,

guide, and Jesus gladly imparted to them additional instruction. But their having become truly pious, and their having become attached to Jesus, would not induce the Pharisees to cease regarding them as irreligious; for even Jesus himself they could stigmatize as a glutton and a wine-drinker. See Matt. 11: 19. However reformed, then, persons belonging to these classes might become through the instructions of Jesus, the odious appellation of *publicans and sinners* would still be given them.

2. *The Pharisees and scribes murmured.* They made it an objection against Jesus, that he would condescend to be on so familiar terms with such persons; as though such conduct detracted from the dignity of a religious teacher, and was a just cause of suspicion as to the moral purity of his character. The Pharisees cared little about the low and the degraded; they thought rather about the dignity and emolument which pertained to the office of a religious teacher. The views of Jesus were entirely different; and he stated it as one of the deciding evidences of his being the Messiah, that "the poor had the gospel preached to them." See Matt. 11: 5.

3. *He spake this parable.* In order to meet this cavil of the Pharisees, and to vindicate himself for associating with those whom they contemptuously styled *sinners*, Jesus brought to view, in a parable, the reasons for his conduct. It was the express purpose of his coming, to reclaim the guilty who were wandering from holiness and happiness; and having succeeded in reclaiming some, it was natural that he should rejoice in his success, and should associate with those who had excited so painful an interest in his bosom, and for whom his solicitude had been availing. It was natural, even, that he should feel more joy in contemplating these recently reclaimed wanderers than in contemplating multitudes of holy beings that had never departed from God, and that were never exposed to such danger.

4—6. *What man of you, &c.* Just as a shepherd, observing that one of his sheep had wandered away, would bend all his energies to the reclaiming of that one sheep, neglecting, for a time, the flock which was in safety, leaving them in the pasture. And should his anxious seeking for the one wanderer prove successful, with what interest would he take it up, torn and emaciated, and bring it back to the fold! And who would think it strange if, in the fulness of his joy at having recovered the hapless wanderer, he should speak of the circumstance to his neighbors, and manifest more pleasure in contemplating and still taking care of that sheep, than he would show for the whole flock which had not been exposed to danger? Now, the principle which would lead such a shepherd to rejoice, would also lead Jesus to look with peculiar interest on *sinners* who had been reclaimed, and who still needed and desired his watchful care. ‖ *Wilderness;* equivalent to the word *pasture.* See on Matt. 3: 1. ‖ *Layeth it on his shoulders.* The sheep may be regarded as having suffered injury, and as requiring great tenderness of treatment. The strong affection of Oriental shepherds for their sheep well

Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost.

7 I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance.

8 Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find *it?*

9 And when she hath found *it*, she calleth *her* friends and *her* neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

10 Likewise, I say unto you, There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

11 And he said, A certain man had two sons:

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justifies this particular in the description.

7. *Just persons, who need no repentance.* The word *beings* would exhibit the Saviour's thought more clearly than the word *persons.* He did not mean to represent any *persons on earth* as not needing repentance (see on Matt. 9 : 13); but his idea was, that one sinner who has become a true penitent is an object of more absorbing interest in heaven than multitudes of holy beings would be, who had never been exposed to eternal death. And if such feelings in respect to penitent sinners exist in heaven, surely the holy and benevolent breast of Jesus would swell with emotion in contemplating those whom he had reclaimed; and it was, in the Pharisees, an entire oversight of the Messiah's design, and of the spontaneous feelings of a holy heart, that induced them to find fault with Jesus. Even if those Pharisees had really been as righteous as they professed to be, and had not needed repentance, it would be natural that Jesus should rejoice more over those whom all acknowledged to be sinners, than over *them.*

8—10. In enforcing the same thought, Jesus appealed to them, whether a woman, having a few pieces of money, and losing one of them, and feeling that in her circumstances even *one* was too valuable to be lost, would not direct all her efforts to the finding of what she had lost; and if she should find it, would she not show more joy at having found the one piece than she would in reference to all which she had not lost? And who would think of finding fault with her for experiencing so much pleasure in having found the one piece of money? Rather, would not her friends rejoice with her, and express to her their congratulations? And why, then, should not Jesus feel a deep interest in reclaimed sinners? Why should the Pharisees find fault with him? Had their hearts been right, and had they felt such a sympathy for the people as religious teachers and guides ought to feel, they would have rejoiced with him in so desirable a result of his efforts. But since the Pharisees found fault with Jesus on account of his interest in these reclaimed sinners, they betrayed the absence of all those feelings which the occasion demanded. *Light a candle.* This circumstance indicates a careful, earnest search, a searching in every dark corner. The houses of the poor were not well lighted from without; so that, even in day-time, a lamp or torch would be needed in order to make a thorough search.

11. In order to show very distinctly, and to rebuke, the utterly unjustifiable spirit which the Pharisees and scribes had manifested, he added another parable. Here, an undutiful son is pictured to us, who, after sinking to an exceedingly low depth of degradation, became penitent, and returned to his father. The father, perceiving satisfactory evi-

12 And the younger of them said to *his* father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth *to me*. And he divided unto them *his* living.

13 And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

14 And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

15 And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

16 And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him.

17 And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's

dence that his wandering son had come to a proper mind, at once receives him, and orders special manifestations of joy at his recovery from guilt and ruin. The brother of the penitent feels no interest in his having come back, is angry at the father's expressions of joy, needs to be reasoned with on the propriety of his father's deep interest at the wanderer's return, and with a haughty opinion of his own good desert, blames his father for having never manifested a special interest in *him*. Now, as this father gladly received his returning son, so God would receive repenting sinners; and the same principle which would justify the manifesting of so much happiness at the prodigal's return, would justify Jesus in being so much interested in the penitent *sinners* who had returned to obedience. And the unlovely, selfish spirit which the elder brother showed, forcibly exhibited the temper which the scribes and Pharisees manifested. If they were right in their feelings, then was that elder brother right. The parable must have covered them with shame.

12. *He divided unto them his living.* It was sometimes the case that a father would make a distribution, in part, of his property among his sons, making a suitable reservation for himself.

13. *Gathered all together.* We may suppose him either to have received his portion in money, or to have disposed, for money, of what he had received. ‖ *Wasted his substance;* squandered his property. ‖ *With riotous living;* living in a dissolute manner.

15. *Joined himself;* engaged himself as a laborer, hired himself out. ‖ *To feed swine.* This, in the estimation of a Jew, was a most degrading and revolting employment. Other nations, also, regarded the employment as peculiarly vile. The design of introducing this particular was, to express an exceedingly low degradation.

16. *He would fain have filled, &c.;* he would gladly have filled, if he could have had permission. But this was not granted him. ‖ *Husks.* The original word, thus rendered, signifies the fruit of the carob-tree, which grows in Eastern countries, and even in the southern parts of Europe. The fruit of this tree was used for swine, and sometimes even poor people subsisted on it. The tree produces pods, with a fruit somewhat like beans. ‖ *And no man gave unto him;* but no one permitted him. The master to whom he had hired himself would, of course, engage to furnish him food. But the representation is, that he had such poor fare, and so scanty a portion even of that, that he longed to partake of the swine's food, but was not allowed. The swine's food was, probably, that which was measured out to them at certain hours of the day, in addition to their feeding themselves in the fields.

have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and before thee,

19 And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

20 And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

21 And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against Heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

22 But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put *it* on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on *his* feet:

23 And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill *it;* and let us eat, and be merry:

24 For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

25 Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

26 And he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant.

27 And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

28 And he was angry, and would not go in; therefore came his father out, and entreated him.

29 And he, answering, said to *his* father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy

18. *Against Heaven;* against God.

22, 23. *Bring forth the best robe,* &c. The father directed that he should be dressed in a manner becoming a most joyous occasion, and that a suitable entertainment should be prepared. He thus manifested the joy which he himself felt, and gave his son an assurance that he was received, not as a servant, but as a son. ‖ *The fatted calf.* An article of food peculiarly esteemed in the East. ‖ *Merry;* joyful.

24. *Dead;* as to filial duty. ‖ *Is alive again;* is recovered to a sense of duty. ‖ *He was lost, and is found.* The same idea is here expressed as in the preceding words. A child, pursuing such a course as the prodigal son had, might as well, so far as filial love and duty are concerned, during the time of his misconduct, be wholly lost or dead; but when he should repent of his course, and act in accordance with filial love and duty, he would be no longer *lost*, but *found;* no longer *dead*, but *alive*.

25. *Music and dancing.* A usual accompaniment of festivity in the East.

29. *Lo, these many years,* &c. The elder son justified his anger at the welcome reception given to the prodigal, by asserting his own long-continued filial obedience, and by complaining that, notwithstanding his upright conduct, his father had not manifested, on any occasion, so much joy in respect to him, as he was now manifesting in respect to this disobedient, wasteful child. ‖ *A kid.* As compared with a *fatted calf*, the mention of a *kid* was an imputation of neglect towards himself, and of whol

commandment; and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

31 And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me; and all that I have is thine.

32 It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

CHAPTER XVI.

AND he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods.

2 And he called him, and said

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ly unjustifiable regard for the younger son.

31. *Son*, &c. The father reminded him, that there was a great difference between his case and that of his brother. *He* had always been at home, and there had occurred no occasion for any such special joy; and, besides, he was enjoying, jointly with himself, the whole estate. He had not, then, been neglected, but had been continually honored; he had no cause for complaint. And the joy manifested at the return of his brother would not detract from his happiness, or from the esteem in which he had been held; while yet, in view of the sad circumstances from which his brother had been rescued, there was a special propriety in the demonstrations of joy. Thus, in applying the parable, even if the Pharisees had been the obedient and righteous ones they professed to be, they could not be justified for exercising the spirit which they had exhibited towards the penitent sinners. But as every one would see how unreasonable was the elder son's conduct, how unkind, selfish, arrogant was his temper, so no one could fail to see that the murmurings of the Pharisees, even if their views of themselves had been right, too plainly indicated an unkind, selfish, and arrogant temper. The Saviour did not intend, by comparing them to the elder son, to allow that they had always been righteous; but taking them on their own ground, reasoning with them according to their own pretensions, he meant, by comparing them to the elder son, to bring out distinctly to view the utter unreasonableness of their murmuring at him for receiving *sinners*, and being on intimate terms with them.

REMARK. The representation given of the prodigal son shows several particulars as to THE NATURE OF TRUE REPENTANCE. 1. He was deeply affected by a view of his unhappy condition. vs. 16, 17.

2. He was deeply sensible of his guilt. v. 18.

3. He was ready to make most humble acknowledgments. vs. 18, 19.

4. He felt that he had no claim on his father's kindness, and that the lowest station in his father's family was above his deserts. v. 19.

5. In this temper of mind he surrendered himself to his father, submitting the whole case to his father's wisdom.

Such are the feelings and the conduct of a penitent sinner towards God.

LEARN, too, 1. How ready is God to welcome a repenting sinner! v. 20.

2. How joyful an event is the return to God of a wandering sinner!

CHAPTER XVI.

1. *And he said also*, &c. Another parable follows, the design of which appears to have been to show the

unto him, How is it that I hear this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship: for thou mayest be no longer steward.

3 Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? for my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed.

4 I am resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses.

5 So he called every one of his lord's debtors *unto him*, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord?

6 And he said, A hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty.

7 Then said he to another, And how much owest thou? And he said, A hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, Take thy bill, and write fourscore.

8 And the lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the chil-

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right use of temporal blessings, or the wisdom of so using our temporal blessings as to secure our eternal welfare. For this purpose, a person is introduced who was expecting to be dismissed from his employer's service, and who shrewdly secured to himself the favor of those with whom he had had dealings, and thus provided for himself a home when he should be in destitute circumstances. ‖ *A steward.* The office of a steward was a very important one in wealthy families of the East. He had authority over the servants, and had the general management of affairs. The steward was sometimes one of the servants, who, for his faithfulness, had been thus promoted, and sometimes a free person. ‖ *Wasted his goods;* squandered his property.

3. *Dig.* Under this term may here be included any hard and servile labor.

4. *They may receive me;* some persons may receive me.

5. *So he called,* &c. Having charge of his employer's pecuniary accounts, he determined, by a reduction of the bills against the debtors, to place the debtors under obligations to himself, and thus to secure their favor and their kind offices when he should be thrown into distress.

6. *Measures.* The particular measure here mentioned was the Hebrew *bath*, containing between seven and nine gallons. ‖ *Write fifty;* write a new bill, and, instead of a hundred *baths*, write only fifty. Thus he favored the debtor.

7. *Measures.* The particular measure here meant, being a dry measure, was the Hebrew *cor*, containing about fourteen bushels.

8. *The lord;* the employer of the steward. ‖ *Commended — because he had done wisely.* He saw and praised the shrewdness of his steward, while, of course, he would be indignant at his fraudulent manner of proceeding. The steward showed a *sagacity* in promoting his own interests, which was adapted to excite commendation, but which ought to have been more honestly directed. In the thefts and dishonest practices of men, we are sometimes struck with admiration at the cunning and shrewdness which are displayed. ‖ *For the children of this world,* &c. A remark made by our Saviour in commencing the application of the parable. *The children of this world* are those whose thoughts and aims have entire respect to the present world. *The children of light,* on the contrary, are those in whom divine knowledge dwells, and who are seeking the bliss of heaven. The former are *wiser*, that is, *more sagacious*, in accomplishing *their* objects, than the latter in endeavoring to attain *theirs*. ‖ *In their generation;* in

dren of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light.

9 And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.

10 He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much.

11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true *riches?*

12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another

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their dealings with the people of their day; or, as we briefly say, in their day.

9. *Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness.* The word *of* here signifies *by; make to yourselves friends by the mammon,* &c. Mammon means *wealth.* See on Matt. 6: 24. Wealth is here called *wealth of unrighteousness,* because it is so often acquired by unrighteous means. The Saviour did not here give advice respecting wealth which was known to have been acquired in an unrighteous way; but respecting wealth in general, which (as he conveys the hint) is so often obtained in an unjust manner that the epithet *unrighteous* is too often applicable to it. This epithet was a very natural one in connection with the parable he had just spoken. The advice of the Saviour is, that, by a proper use of wealth, we should secure to ourselves friends against a time of need; that is, by using it in obedience to God's will, for relieving the destitute and contributing to their wants, we should secure his favor. Compare Mark 10: 21. Luke 14: 12—14. ‖ *When ye fail;* when ye cease to live. ‖ *They may receive you,* &c. In a vivid way of representation, those who have been relieved by the bounty of the rich, and who have gone before them into heaven, are exhibited as in the attitude of welcoming them into heaven, the everlasting abode; thus requiting the favors which the rich and benevolent showed them on earth; just as we often speak of our pious friends, who have died, as giving us, at our death, a welcome reception into heaven. The expression *They may receive you* may also be explained by reference to a Hebrew mode of speaking, by which those words are equivalent to these—*Ye may be received.* The Bible frequently teaches, that, by a kind and charitable use of this world's goods, we may testify our love to the Saviour, and our obedience to him, and may secure his approbation in respect to eternal life. See Matt. 25: 34—40. 1 Tim. 6: 17—19.

10. *He that is faithful,* &c. Those who possess wealth are cautioned, in the preceding verses, to make a proper use of it, because, as is now expressed in this verse, if a person is found faithful in a small trust, there is reason to believe he would be faithful in a larger one; and, if he be fraudulent and unfaithful in a small trust, there is reason to believe he would also be unfaithful if a larger trust should be committed to him. ‖ *That which is least;* a very small trust.

11. The principle declared in the preceding verse is now directly applied. *The unrighteous mammon;* the wealth of this world, so called, as in v. 9, because it is so often obtained by unrighteous means. ‖ *The true riches;* the real, genuine good of heaven. If you have abused earthly riches, who would think of committing to you the heavenly treasure?

12. *And if,* &c. And, if a person has proved himself unfaithful as a steward, in managing another man's affairs, who would be encouraged to settle on him an estate to be his own? This verse contemplates men as being stewards of God, having received from him a certain trust, to be man-

man's, who shall give you that which is your own?

13 No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

14 And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him.

15 And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.

16 The law and the prophets

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aged according to the directions which God has communicated. Now, if they are unfaithful in respect to what has been merely entrusted to them for a temporary use, as God's agents, surely they cannot expect, after the earthly trust has expired, to receive for their own, and for permanent possession, the honors of heaven. ‖ *Which is another man's;* that which belongs to another, whether it be man or God that is spoken of. ‖ *Who shall give*, &c. A strong way of expressing negation: *No one will give*, or, *Who would think of giving?* ‖ *Your own?* Heaven is in this verse expressed by the words *your own*, because it is a permanent condition, not exposed to the fluctuations which are incident to living on another person's estate, from which the occupant may be displaced at the proprietor's will. As, on earth, the difference between a steward and a proprietor is manifest in respect of *permanency*, and the proprietor's permanency of possession would be expressed by calling the estate *his own*, and the steward's temporary occupancy by calling the estate *another's*, so the enduring bliss of heaven is expressed by calling it *our own*, while the fact that our earthly possession is a temporary one, shows that the right of ownership belongs to another, and that we are merely stewards of God.

13. *No servant*, &c. Having shown the need of employing earthly treasures in such a manner as to be found faithful to God, and as to be admitted to the greater trusts and honors of heaven, the Saviour distinctly declared that the interests of the present world must be held as subordinate to the interests of God and heaven, — else we shall fail of heaven. See on Matt. 6:24.

Caution. Let no one think that only to rich men are applicable the instructions of Jesus respecting a proper use of what pertains to the present world; for who is there that is not in danger of inordinately loving the treasures and the joys of earth, and of abusing even the little which God may have intrusted to his care? Let us all bear in mind, each for himself, that we are the Lord's stewards, and that he will call us to an account. May we be found to have been faithful in our earthly trust, and be welcomed to the heavenly mansion!

15. *Justify yourselves;* make a show of being righteous. Compare Matt. 6:2, 5, 16. ‖ *Highly esteemed among men — abomination in the sight of God.* A saying which must be understood with reference to the pretended piety of the Pharisees, for which they were, by many, held in high estimation. But God saw through the disguise, and held them in abhorrence. The Saviour distinctly declared that, however fair was their exterior, their hearts were corrupt. Thus they afforded a complete proof of the sentiment that God sees not as man sees; that man may highly extol, while God thoroughly loathes. See Matt. 23:27, 28. 1 Sam. 16:7.

16. *The law and the prophets*, &c.

were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it.

17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail.

18 Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from *her* husband, committeth adultery.

19 There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day:

20 And there was a certain beggar, named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores,

21 And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.

22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried:

See Matt. 11: 13. ‖ *The kingdom*, &c. See Matt. 11: 12.

17. See Matt. 5: 18.

18. See Matt. 5: 32.

19. *There was a certain rich man*, &c. A parable now follows, which was happily adapted to impress the sentiments that Jesus had already delivered respecting the use of earthly treasures. vs. 9—12. He had taught that earthly treasures should be regarded as a trust committed to men by the Lord; that they ought to be employed not so much in personal aggrandizement and gratification as in relieving the wants, and promoting the welfare, of others. Such a use of them, proceeding from a sincere love to God and to man, would enable their possessor to render a satisfactory account, and would be followed by admission to the unfailing happiness of heaven. Jesus now gives a description of a wealthy man, who was intent on his own gratification, and neglected the poor and distressed. He shows the future state of such a man; and, in contrast with it, in order to teach how unsuitable is a supreme devotion to wealth and present comfort, he represents the poor man, who had been overlooked, as received into heaven. The affecting contrast between the two cases was happily adapted to show the supreme importance of heaven, the vanity of earthly prosperity as our chief portion, and the proper use of earthly riches. ‖ *Purple and fine linen.* Garments of purple, and of fine cotton and linen, were indications of wealth.

20. *Beggar.* The original word means simply *a poor man.*

21. This verse and the preceding show the extreme poverty of Lazarus. The rich man is not represented as abusing him, as refusing to let him remain at his gate, or to give him the scraps from his table; but he showed him no special attention, and took no particular interest in his welfare, though the Jews were required by their law thus to do. See Deut. 15: 7, 8. Is. 58: 7. Prov. 3: 27.

22. *Into Abraham's bosom.* The bliss of heaven is represented by a banquet, at which were the worthies of the Jewish nation. The guests at a banquet reclined on couches; and, when not engaged in eating, one could lay his head on the breast of the person next him, for conversation. To be placed next to a distinguished guest, was a signal honor. Lazarus is here described as having the signal honor of being placed next to Abraham. The idea is, he was received into the happiness of the righteous. ‖ *Was buried.* This circumstance was probably added, in order to show that the rich man was

23 And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.

24 And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame.

25 But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.

26 And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us, that *would come* from thence.

27 Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house:

28 For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment.

29 Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them.

30 And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.

31 And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

CHAPTER XVII.

THEN said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but

honored by his fellow-men in death, as well as in life.

23. *In hell — being in torments;* in that part of the world of spirits where the wicked are subjected to punishment.

26. *Would pass;* desire to pass.

27, 28. *Send him to my father's house,* &c. So indescribably wretched did the man feel his situation to be, that he could not bear to think of any relatives coming into it. ‖ *Testify unto them;* warn them by my fate to pursue a different course.

29. *Moses and the prophets;* the sacred Scriptures. See Matt. 11: 13.

31. *If they hear not,* &c. If their minds are so intent on the present world that they will not hearken to the Scriptures, they would not listen, should one rise from the dead. Alas! how true was this saying in respect to the Pharisees and the great body of the Jews. After Jesus had been raised up from the dead, they still stified conviction, and still persisted in sin.

REFLECTIONS. 1. Let us cultivate an indifference to the wealth and honors of this world. They do not confer real worth of character, and they may be followed by everlasting misery and contempt.

2. Are we poor? Let us be submissive to the divine will, and contented, and mainly anxious to obtain the glory and bliss of heaven.

3. The happy state of the righteous, and the miserable state of the wicked, beyond the grave, will not come to an end. v. 26.

4. We have all the requisite means for attaining eternal life. If they should be miraculously increased, we could not be sure that they would be more efficacious. Let us rightly use the advantages which God has bestowed, and lay hold on eternal life.

CHAPTER XVII.

1, 2. Compare Matt. 18: 6, 7.

that offences will come: but woe *unto him* through whom they come!

2 It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

3 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

4 And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him.

5 And the apostles said unto the Lord, Increase our faith.

6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

7 But which of you having a servant ploughing, or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, Go and sit down to meat?

8 And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken; and afterward thou shalt eat and drink?

9 Doth he thank that servant, because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not.

3, 4. Compare Matt. 18: 15, 21, 22.

5. *Increase our faith.* In Matt. 17: 14—21, it is related that the disciples were unable to heal a certain person. Jesus informed them that their inability resulted from their unbelief, and, by a forcible illustration, showed them the efficacy of strong faith. On that occasion, or on a similar one, this request might have been made.

6. Compare Matt. 17: 20. *Sycamine-tree.* The same as in 19: 4 is called *a sycamore-tree.* It has a resemblance to the mulberry in its leaves, while its fruit is similar, in appearance, to the fig. It is frequent in the level parts of Palestine.

7. *But which of you, &c.* This verse is not connected in sense with the preceding. It introduces another important sentiment of our Lord, preserved according to Luke's manner, without special regard to the connection. Our Lord, as appears from Matt. 19: 27—29, had informed his disciples that distinguished bliss would be awarded to them hereafter as a result of their laboring in his service. Perhaps he found it necessary to caution them against an undue estimate of their services, and to impress distinctly on them, after those remarks, their duty to cherish a spirit of *unwearied devotion to his service,* and of *deep humility* in regard to their deserts. The illustration which has been here preserved by Luke was happily adapted to produce such an effect. The amount of it is this: A servant must hold himself ready continually to serve his master; having performed a certain piece of work, he must not calculate on refreshing himself at once, but must still wait on his master, and afterwards partake of refreshment. Still further, after continued and unwearied attention to the duties appointed him, he must not consider himself as entitled to the thanks of his master, as though he had conferred favors, or imposed obligations on his master. He ought to cherish an humble opinion of his services, and regard himself as having performed no more than mere duty.

8. *Gird thyself.* See on 12: 37.

9. *Trow.* This is an old word, meaning *think.*

10 So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do.

11 And it came to pass, as he went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee.

12 And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off:

13 And they lifted up *their* voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.

14 And when he saw *them*, he said unto them, Go show yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed.

15 And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God,

16 And fell down on *his* face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan.

17 And Jesus, answering, said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where *are* the nine?

18 There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger.

19 And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole.

20 And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when

10. *We are unprofitable servants.* This language is to be understood as we understand a friend who has done us a favor, to whom we say, I am much obliged to you, and who rejoins by saying, *Not at all; you are under no obligations to me.* It is the language of modesty and humility, refusing to put a high estimate on any services which we may have rendered. The Saviour thus enjoined the cultivation of an humble spirit, which will not, for a moment, think of having conferred a favor on God, or of having imposed on him the slightest obligation to reward us. After all we can do, we never can pass beyond the limit of duty; we never can *merit* the divine favor by performing any extra services. But it becomes us, in all humility, to acknowledge that we have no *claim* on the favor of God.

Reflection. How contrary to the spirit of the gospel is self-valuation! Compare Luke 18: 9—14.

12. *As he entered*, &c.; as he was about entering. The leprous men were not in the village, but in the vicinity of it. Lepers were not allowed to remain in society, while diseased. See Lev. 13: 46. ‖ *Stood afar off.* The touch of a leprous person communicated ceremonial uncleanness.

14. *Show yourselves unto the priests.* This direction contained in it an assurance that they should soon be healed. Lepers, when healed, were directed to go to the priest for examination, and for making the prescribed offering. See on Matt. 8: 2—4.

19. *Thy faith*, &c. Compare Matt. 9: 22.

How touching to the beholders must have been the gratitude of this Samaritan, contrasted with the conduct of the Jewish lepers! And how strong claims has the Saviour on our gratitude!

20. *Demanded;* inquired. ‖ *The kingdom of God;* the reign of the Messiah, understood, doubtless, by the Pharisees, as a glorious temporal reign. See Matt. 3: 2. In the Saviour's reply, which immediately follows, this expression is used with the meaning which the Jews *ought* to

the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.

21 Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, Lo there! for behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

22 And he said unto the disciples, The days will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the days of the Son of man, and ye shall not see *it*.

23 And they shall say to you, See here! or, See there! go not after *them*, nor follow *them*.

24 For as the lightning that lighteneth out of the one *part* under heaven, shineth unto the other *part* under heaven; so shall also the Son of man be in his day.

25 But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation.

26 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man.

27 They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28 Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot: they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded;

29 But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom, it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed *them* all:

30 Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.

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have attached to it, namely, the dominion of God in *the hearts of men*, the establishment of the holy principles of religion. ‖ *With observation;* with outward show, in such a manner as to be obvious to the sight.

21. *Neither shall they say*, &c. It will not be introduced by any public announcement that in *this* place, or in *that*, the Messiah is coming forth. See on Matt. 24 : 26. ‖ *Is within you.* It is an internal, spiritual reign. Expect not, then, outward show, as manifesting where and when this reign is commenced.

22. *He said unto the disciples.* As the establishment of his cause had been spoken of, Jesus made known to his disciples various events which would be connected with it. He led them to expect that he should be away from them, and that they would encounter times of great suffering; that he should afterwards appear for the vindication of his cause, and that signal vengeance would be taken on his adversaries. ‖ *The days of the Son of man;* the time when you enjoyed the presence and instructions of me, the Messiah. He would be absent from them, and they would deeply feel the need of his presence.

23, 24. Compare Matt. 24 : 26, 27.

25. *But first*, &c. The events which Jesus had just predicted were to occur some time afterwards. Previously to their occurrence, Jesus would be publicly rejected.

26, 27. *The days of the Son of man;* the time when the Messiah shall come to vindicate his cause and to confound his foes. Compare Matt. 24 : 37, 38.

28, 29. *Lot — Sodom.* See Gen. 19 : 14.

30. *Even thus shall it be*, &c. As there was, in the days of Noah and in the days of Lot, a general disregard of the divine warnings, a general disbelief as to the impending calamities, so will it be when the Messiah will be about to appear for inflicting punishment on his adversaries. ‖ *Is revealed;* shall make his appearance

31 In that day, he which shall be upon the house-top, and his stuff in the house, let him not come down to take it away: and he that is in the field, let him likewise not return back.

32 Remember Lot's wife.

33 Whosoever shall seek to save his life, shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life, shall preserve it.

34 I tell you, in that night there shall be two *men* in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

35 Two *women* shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

36 Two *men* shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

37 And they answered and said unto him, Where, Lord? And he said unto them, Wheresoever the body *is*, thither will the eagles be gathered together.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AND he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always *to* pray, and not to faint;

2 Saying, There was in a

31. Compare Matt. 24: 16—18.

32. *Lot's wife.* See Gen. 19: 26. The wife of Lot did not hasten from the danger as she had been warned. So the times of danger, of which Jesus was warning, would not admit of any person's *delaying* his escape; he must at once, without hinderance, flee to a place of safety, else he would fall in the general calamity.

33. *Whosoever*, &c. This common saying, which occurs elsewhere with the addition of a few words in reference to the life hereafter (see Matt. 10: 39), seems here to be applied to the preservation of natural life. As Lot's wife, through an ill-judged concern about the conveniences of this world and the delay occasioned by that concern, lost her life, so a person who should not be willing at once to abandon whatever articles of his might be in the house, or in the city (see v. 31), and out of regard to them should delay his flight, would, in all probability, lose his life. While he who should disregard such things, and should incur the loss of what might be very needful for his convenience, and should therefore hasten his escape,—he is the one that would save his life. The times would be exceedingly perilous; and no regard ought to be paid to the conveniences of this world, if a person meant to escape with his life.

34—36. Compare Matt. 24: 40, 41. *In that night.* The darkness of night is used as an emblem of distress, of most dangerous times. ¶ *In one bed;* rather, on one *couch*, sitting or reclining together.

37. *Where, Lord?* A question prompted by curiosity, and not necessary, for any practical purposes, to be immediately answered, as time would sufficiently soon furnish an answer. Hence the Saviour gave no direct reply to it, but made a remark, intimating that as surely as a bird of prey would find a dead body, so surely would the agents of divine vengeance find the objects to be destroyed. ‖ *Eagles.* See on Matt. 24: 28.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. A parable is now introduced, designed to encourage *constancy* and *importunity* in prayer. The disciples would, ere long, be persecuted and oppressed by the Jews. But they must not cease to pray earnestly to God for deliverance from their calamities, though deliverance should seem to be delayed. The time would certainly come, when God would rescue them, and overthrow their adversaries. They ought to repose im-

city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man.

3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

5 Yet, because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

7 And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

9 And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

10 Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican.

11 The Pharisee stood and

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plicit faith in God, that he would not neglect them.

3. *Avenge, &c.*; do me justice, defend me.

7. *And shall not God;* who is a *just* and *merciful* ruler. ‖ *Avenge his own elect?* rescue from oppression those who are his chosen friends? ‖ *Though he bear long with them;* though he delay in respect to them.

How strong is the argument here presented for cherishing an unwavering confidence in God! If an *unjust* judge can be prevailed on by the importunity of a person for whom he *cares not at all*, will not God listen to the entreaties of those whom he regards as his special friends? Compare 11: 5—13.

8. *When the Son of man cometh;* to defend his cause and people, and to destroy his adversaries, that is, the Jewish nation. See Matt. 24: 29, 30. ‖ *Shall he find faith on the earth?* The word translated *earth* often means, in a more restricted sense, *the land.* Here *the country* of the Jews is meant. *Faith* here means *confidence* in God and the Messiah in respect to the deliverance of the Saviour's followers from the persecutions of the Jews. The amount of the question is, Shall he find this confidence to which I have been urging you? Shall he find those who will be reposing an implicit confidence in the power and goodness of God, as the Being who will hear prayer and rescue his people? It is implied, that there would be in the country of the Jews extremely few that would possess this faith. The great body of the nation would be in unbelief; and many, who had made fair promises, would desert the Saviour's cause.

Reflection. Christ will come again to welcome his people to heaven. Will he find *us* reposing a full confidence in all his declarations, and exercising a devout reliance on his goodness and power, in respect to our salvation? He will come to each of us at our death. Let us seek to be waiting *for* him, and trusting *in* him.

We have great encouragement to "pray without ceasing." 1 Thess. 5: 17. Col. 4: 2. Luke 11: 5—13. Matt. 15: 21—28.

9. Another parable is here introduced, designed to show that prayer must be offered in humility, in order to be acceptable to God. *Unto certain;* respecting certain persons.

11, 12. Compare Matt. 6: 5, 16. 23: 23.

prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men *are*, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican.

12 I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess.

13 And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as *his* eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.

14 I tell you, This man went down to his house justified *rather* than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.

15 And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when *his* disciples saw *it*, they rebuked them.

16 But Jesus called them *unto him*, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.

17 Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.

18 And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

19 And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none *is* good, save one, *that is* God.

20 Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother.

21 And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up.

22 Now, when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

23 And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich.

24 And when Jesus saw that he was very sorrowful, he said, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

25 For it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26 And they that heard *it*, said, Who then can be saved?

27 And he said, The things which are impossible with men, are possible with God.

28 Then Peter said, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee.

29 And he said unto them, Verily, I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake,

30 Who shall not receive

14. *Justified;* approved as being pious, accepted. This man, the publican, rather than the Pharisee, was approved; not that the Pharisee was in any degree pleasing to God. ‖ *For every one*, &c. See 14: 11.

15, 17. Compare Matt. 19: 13, 14.

18—30. See Matt. 19: 16—30.

manifold more in this present time, and in the world to come life everlasting.

31 Then he took *unto him* the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished.

32 For he shall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on;

33 And they shall scourge *him*, and put him to death: and the third day he shall rise again.

34 And they understood none of these things: and this saying was hid from them, neither knew they the things which were spoken.

35 And it came to pass, that as he was come nigh unto Jericho, a certain blind man sat by the way-side begging;

36 And hearing the multitude pass by, he asked what it meant.

37 And they told him, that Jesus of Nazareth passeth by.

38 And he cried, saying, Jesus, *thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

39 And they which went before rebuked him, that he should hold his peace: but he cried so much the more, *Thou* son of David, have mercy on me.

40 And Jesus stood and commanded him to be brought unto him: and when he was come near, he asked him,

41 Saying, What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receive my sight.

42 And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy faith hath saved thee.

43 And immediately he received his sight, and followed him, glorifying God: and all the people, when they saw *it*, gave praise unto God.

CHAPTER XIX.

AND *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho.

2 And behold, *there was* a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

3 And he sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

31—34. See Matthew 20: 17—19. Compare also Luke 9: 43—45.

35—43. Compare Matt. 20: 29—34. Mark 10: 46—52.

CHAPTER XIX.

2. *Chief among the publicans;* a chief publican. He was not one of the inferior collectors, but one who employed collectors under him. See INTRODUCTORY EXPLANATIONS, in the first volume, page xvii. In the conquered provinces, generally, of the Roman empire, Roman knights were appointed chief publicans, but an exception was made in respect to the Jews. The management of the revenues was committed to the Jews themselves. Those Jews who obtained the management of these affairs were regarded as holding a very considerable civil rank, though the nature of the office made even them subject to the ill-will of the nation.

3. *The press;* the crowd of people.

4 And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore-tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

5 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down: for to-day I must abide at thy house.

6 And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7 And when they saw *it*, they all murmured, saying, That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8 And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore *him* four-fold.

9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

11 And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear.

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4. *Sycamore-tree.* See on 17: 6.

7. *A sinner.* See on 15: 1.

8. *I give.* The present is here used for the future, *I will give.* ‖ *Taken by false accusation.* The idea is, *if I have defrauded.* ‖ *Restore;* will restore, I resolve to pay back. ‖ *Four-fold.* According to Ex. 22: 4, 7, a restitution of double the amount would have satisfied the law. But Zaccheus meant to show the willingness of his heart to make most ample restitution. Thus Zaccheus declared his serious intention of leading a life of piety. The account here given is very brief. Probably, after arriving at the house of Zaccheus, Jesus had much conversation with him of a religious nature, and the conversation had a salutary effect. Under the influence of the Saviour's instructions, he made the declarations here recorded. How different the result, in this instance, from that in the case of the young man mentioned in the preceding chapter! vs. 18—23.

9. *To this house;* this family. ‖ *A son of Abraham;* not only a descendant of Abraham, but one similar to Abraham, having traits of character like Abraham's. Compare John 8: 39.

10. *To seek and to save, &c.* Thus to Zaccheus was given the blessing, for bestowing which on guilty and lost men Jesus came into the world. Zaccheus needed to be sought and to be saved, and salvation was bestowed on him.

11. *That the kingdom of God should immediately appear.* The disciples were now on their way to Jerusalem, and were expecting to attend the festival of the passover. Under the influence of their earthly views respecting the Messiah's reign, they indulged the hope that, when he should arrive at Jerusalem, the capital of the country, and thronged at that festival with multitudes of the Jews, he would assert his royal prerogatives, commence his reign, elevate his personal friends to dignity, rescue the nation from their subjugated state, and inflict judgments on their foes. Now these earthly views Jesus wished, in a kind manner, to correct, and to withdraw their thoughts from expecting any display of worldly authority. He wished to lead them to this point, namely, that

12 He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.

13 And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.

14 But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this *man* to reign over us.

15 And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

16 Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.

17 And he said unto him,

hereafter, not now, — in another state, *not in this*, — the dignity to be enjoyed by the Messiah's friends would be bestowed, and the judgments which he would inflict would be endured. Besides, even the people who might have been expected to submit to his government on earth (namely, the Jews), he intimated, were cherishing a spirit of hostility to him, which would require that even they should be visited with his just indignation. For communicating this instruction, he spoke the parable which follows. The parable appears to exhibit these two thoughts: (1) That, at some indefinitely future time, the rewards and the punishments appropriate to the Messiah's reign would be distributed; and (2) that even the Jews, on account of their hostility to the Messiah, would fall under his displeasure. This displeasure was indeed to be, in part, manifested at the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army. See Matt. 24: 15, 29, 30. And to this destruction, as being a signal one in a series of judgments, the Saviour probably had some allusion, while his principal object was to speak of a final retribution, both to his friends and to his foes.

12. *A certain nobleman;* a man of a noble family, one who had a just claim to the dignity which he was seeking. || *A kingdom;* authority over a kingdom, royal power. The circumstance here stated, that this man went away to another country in order to be invested with royal authority, was in accordance with a custom among the Jews. After they became subject to the Roman power, the principal ruler among them held authority by permission of the Roman emperor. Accordingly, after the death of Herod the Great, Archelaus his son, whom he had by will appointed his heir, went to Rome in order to be confirmed in the government of his country.

13. *Servants;* not domestic servants, but persons in his employ and devoted to his interests, whom he intended to elevate to power. || *Pounds;* a silver coin in the Saviour's time, equivalent, according to different accounts, to between fourteen and twenty dollars. || *Occupy;* engage in business.

14. *His citizens;* the people of his country, over whom he was seeking the royal power. || *Sent a message after him;* sent ambassadors to the seat of supreme power, whither he himself was going. These ambassadors were to request, that his wishes might not be gratified. || *We will not have*, &c.; we wish not to have, &c. The circumstance here represented was similar to what had actually taken place among the Jews. When Archelaus went to Rome, as above mentioned, the Jews sent to the Roman emperor fifty messengers to defeat his design. They did not, however, succeed. See on Matthew 2: 22.

17. *Authority over ten cities.* A reward corresponding to his faithful-

Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.

18 And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

19 And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities.

20 And another came, saying, Lord, behold *here is* thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

22 And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, *thou* wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

24 And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give *it* to him that hath ten pounds.

25 (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26 For I say unto you, that unto every one which hath, shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.

27 But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay *them* before me.

28 And when he had thus spoken, he went before, ascending up to Jerusalem.

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ness in his master's service. Compare 16: 10.

19. *Over five cities.* A corresponding reward. The king, having become established in the royal power, is represented as rewarding his faithful friends, by making them distinguished officers in his kingdom, and conferring on them such a degree of power and dignity as corresponded with their proofs of capacity and diligence.

20—26. Compare Matt. 25: 24—29. *Thou takest up that thou layedst not down;* thou takest what belongs to another—an accusation of injustice and oppression.

27. *But those mine enemies,* &c. Compare v. 14. In connection with a proper retribution to his friends, he doomed his avowed enemies to signal punishment.

Thus, in applying the parable to the topic of conversation (v. 11), the disciples ought not to expect such an *immediate* (v. 11) display of the Messiah's regal authority as they had been anticipating — an *immediate*, speedy distribution of the rewards and punishments appropriate to his station. On the contrary, the Messiah was intending *to go away* (v. 12) from earth to heaven, and at some indefinitely future period to return in the exercise of his proper power. Meanwhile, his friends must labor in his service (v. 13), and endeavor to advance his interests, expecting to be called to an account. His enemies, too, would show their hostility (v. 14), and attempt to subvert his power; but in vain. In due time he would return (v. 15), elevate to distinguished honors his faithful servants, reduce to shame the unfaithful, and consign to merited woe his avowed enemies. This coming of the Messiah to administer rewards and punishments, is the same as is spoken of in Matt. 25 31—46.

29 And it came to pass, when he was come nigh to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount called *the mount* of Olives, he sent two of his disciples,

30 Saying, Go ye into the village over against *you;* in the which at your entering ye shall find a colt tied, whereon yet never man sat: loose him, and bring *him hither.*

31 And if any man ask you, Why do ye loose *him?* thus shall ye say unto him, Because the Lord hath need of him.

32 And they that were sent went their way, and found even as he had said unto them.

33 And as they were loosing the colt, the owners thereof said unto them, Why loose ye the colt?

34 And they said, The Lord hath need of him.

35 And they brought him to Jesus: and they cast their garments upon the colt, and they set Jesus thereon.

36 And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

37 And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice, for all the mighty works that they had seen;

38 Saying, Blessed *be* the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: Peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

39 And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto him, Master, rebuke thy disciples.

40 And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.

41 And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it,

42 Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in

29—40. Compare Matt. 21 : 1—16.

37. *At the descent of the mount;* as he was beginning to descend. The city of Jerusalem was then in full view.

38. *Peace in heaven. Peace,* in the Bible, often means *prosperity, happiness.* The idea, in this exclamation, was, May prosperity, or success, be appointed in heaven for the Messiah, that is, by Him who reigns in heaven. ‖ *Glory in the highest;* praise to Him who dwells on high; or, praise be to God among the heavenly hosts.

40. *The stones would immediately cry out.* A strong method of approving the joy which the disciples were manifesting, and of showing how perfectly reasonable it was that the Messiah should be attended with demonstrations of welcome.

41. *Wept over it;* in anticipation of the doom which awaited the city.

How affecting the picture! Jesus is surrounded with an admiring crowd, who rend the air with their shouts of joy. Yet he stops in view of the capital city, and weeps! A king, accompanied by admiring and enthusiastic friends, yet in tears! But he weeps not for himself; though he well knows, that in a few days these shouts of joy are to give place to the rancorous demands of enemies, that he be nailed to a cross like an impostor and a rebel!

42. *If thou hadst known;* if thou hadst considered. ‖ *This thy day;* this time, so propitious for thee, hadst thou rightly regarded it. ‖ *Peace,*

this thy day, the things *which belong* unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.

43 For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side,

44 And shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee: and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another: because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.

45 And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought,

46 Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.

47 And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests, and the scribes, and the chief of the people sought to destroy him,

48 And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him.

CHAPTER XX.

AND it came to pass, *that* on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon *him*, with the elders,

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, By what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?

6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.

7 And they answered, That

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happiness, welfare. The Saviour, overcome with emotion, here made an unfinished sentence; meaning, probably, If thou hadst duly considered the distinguished privileges which have been within thy reach, what bliss wouldst thou have secured! || *Hid from thine eyes;* removed from thee. An end is come to thy privileges and to all thy hopes of bliss.

43, 44. *Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, &c.* The destruction by the Roman army is here particularly foretold. Compare Matt. 24: 2, 15, 21. || *Thy children;* the inhabitants of the city. || *Knewest not.* See v. 42. || *The time of thy visitation;* the time of thy being mercifully regarded, by having the Messiah in the midst of thee.

45, 46. See Matt. 21: 12, 13.

47, 48. Compare Mark 11: 18. *Could not find what they might do;* could not contrive any method of accomplishing their purpose.

CHAPTER XX.

1. *Preached the gospel;* announced the tidings of the Messiah's reign, as well as imparted more general religious instruction. || *Elders;* men of distinction among the Jews, from whom, as well as from the priests and scribes, the members of the Sanhedrim were chosen.

2—8. Compare Matt. 21: 23—27.

they could not tell whence *it was*.

8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

9 Then began he to speak to the people this parable: A certain man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen, and went into a far country for a long time.

10 And at the season he sent a servant to the husbandmen, that they should give him of the fruit of the vineyard: but the husbandmen beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

11 And again he sent another servant: and they beat him also, and entreated *him* shamefully, and sent *him* away empty.

12 And again he sent a third: and they wounded him also, and cast *him* out.

13 Then said the lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? I will send my beloved son: it may be they will reverence *him* when they see him.

14 But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned among themselves, saying, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, that the inheritance may be ours.

15 So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed *him*. What therefore shall the lord of the vineyard do unto them?

16 He shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others. And when they heard *it*, they said, God forbid.

17 And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner?

18 Whosoever shall fall upon that stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

19 And the chief priests and the scribes the same hour sought to lay hands on him; and they feared the people: for they perceived that he had spoken this parable against them.

20 And they watched *him*, and sent forth spies, which should feign themselves just men, that they might take hold of his words, that so they might deliver him unto the power and authority of the governor.

21 And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person *of any*, but teachest the way of God truly:

22 Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Cesar, or no?

23 But he perceived their craftiness, and said unto them, Why tempt ye me?

24 Show me a penny. Whose image and superscription hath it? They answered and said, Cesar's.

25 And he said unto them, Render therefore unto Cesar the things which be Cesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.

26 And they could not take

9—19. See Matt. 21: 33—46.
11. *Entreated;* that is *treated*

20—40. See Matt. 22: 15—34.

hold of his words before the people: and they marvelled at his answer, and held their peace.

27 Then came to *him* certain of the Sadducees (which deny that there is any resurrection), and they asked him,

28 Saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us, If any man's brother die, having a wife, and he die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

29 There were therefore seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and died without children.

30 And the second took her to wife, and he died childless.

31 And the third took her; and in like manner the seven also: and they left no children, and died.

32 Last of all the woman died also.

33 Therefore in the resurrection, whose wife of them is she? for seven had her to wife.

34 And Jesus, answering, said unto them, The children of this world marry, and are given in marriage:

35 But they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry, nor are given in marriage:

36 Neither can they die any more: for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.

37 Now that the dead are raised, even Moses showed at the bush, when he calleth the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

38 For he is not a God of the dead, but of the living: for all live unto him.

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34. *The children of this world marry*, &c. Marriage is intended and is proper for those who live in *this* world.

35. *That world;* the world to come. Those who shall be admitted into *the world to come*, will have no occasion for marriage.

36. *Equal unto the angels;* like the angels, in being immortal, not liable to death. || *Children of God;* similar to God, in being not liable to death. || *Children of the resurrection;* having attained to the resurrection, the future blessed state of the righteous. The thought which our Lord presented is this: Marriage is intended for this mortal state, where "one generation goeth and another cometh;" but it is not intended for the future state, that state being a deathless one.

38. *All live unto him.* They all, all those just spoken of, the ancient patriarchs, are alive *to him*, though *to us* they are dead. Hence he calls himself *still* their God; for he is *now*, as well as formerly, their God, the Being whom they still adore and serve. *To be the God* of any persons is, to be the one whom they worship. Since Jehovah *is*, not merely *was*, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, these patriarchs are still alive in respect to him; because he is not a God of dead, lifeless things, but a God of *living beings*, who only can adore and serve him.

Another view may be presented. The word translated *unto him*, may be translated *by him*. The passage would then be rendered, *for all live by him*. And since it is by the power of God that human life is continued from day to day, by that same power

39 Then certain of the scribes, answering, said, Master, thou hast well said.

40 And after that, they durst not ask him any *question at all.*

41 And he said unto them, How say they that Christ is David's son?

42 And David himself saith in the book of Psalms, The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand,

43 Till I make thine enemies thy footstool.

44 David therefore calleth him Lord; how is he then his son?

45 Then in the audience of all the people, he said unto his disciples,

46 Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts;

47 Which devour widows' houses, and for a show make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation.

CHAPTER XXI.

AND he looked up and saw the rich men casting their gifts into the treasury.

2 And he saw also a certain poor widow, casting in thither two mites.

3 And he said, Of a truth I say unto you, that this poor widow hath cast in more than they all.

4 For all these have of their abundance cast in unto the offerings of God: but she of her penury hath cast in all the living that she had.

5 And as some spake of the temple, how it was adorned with goodly stones, and gifts, he said,

6 *As for* these things which ye behold, the days will come, in the which there shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.

7 And they asked him, saying, Master, but when shall these things be? and what sign *will there be* when these things shall come to pass?

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life can be continued in another world as well as in this. The Saviour had said (see Matt. 22: 29), that the Sadducees had erred through not considering *the power of God.* To this remark he perhaps referred in the expression now under consideration.

39—44. See Matt. 22: 41—46.

45—47. See Matt. 23: 5—7, 14. Mark 12: 38, 39. *Desire to walk;* love to walk. ‖ *Long robes;* a long, flowing article of dress, worn by persons of distinction, and adapted to attract notice by making a venerable appearance.

CHAPTER XXI.

1—4. Compare Mark 12: 41—44.

5, 6. See on Matt. 24: 1, 2. *Gifts.* Donations to the temple, and offerings of splendid quality, were suspended in various parts of the temple. Heathen temples were frequently adorned with spoils captured from enemies, and with voluntary donations in token of gratitude. The same practice was adopted by the Jews.

7—11. Compare Matt. 24: 3—8. *Fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven.* Josephus, the Jewish historian, describes very particularly several uncommon appearances in the heavens, and other singular events, which occurred before the destruction of Jerusalem, and which were considered by the Jews as portending some remarkable changes.

8 And he said, Take heed that ye be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am *Christ;* and the time draweth near: go ye not therefore after them.

9 But when ye shall hear of wars, and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end *is* not by and by.

10 Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom:

11 And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences: and fearful sights, and great signs shall there be from heaven.

12 But before all these they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute *you*, delivering *you* up to the synagogues, and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake.

13 And it shall turn to you for a testimony.

14 Settle *it* therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer.

15 For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.

16 And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and *some* of you shall they cause to be put to death.

17 And ye shall be hated of all *men* for my name's sake.

18 But there shall not a hair of your head perish.

19 In your patience possess ye your souls.

20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.

21 Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto.

These were explained, by some persons, in a manner favorable to the Jews, and by others, unfavorably. Josephus expresses his surprise that such signs were not properly attended to; and represents the Jews as "infatuated, as if they were without eyes to see or minds to consider, so regardless were they of the denunciations that God made to them." That the strange sights observed in the heavens, and the strange voices said to have been heard, and other singular events, were much exaggerated, is very credible; for the people were in a very feverish state of excitement, tossed about by hope and fear. But that God permitted certain things to take place which had all the effect of portents from heaven, cannot well be doubted.

12—19. See Matthew 24: 9—13. Compare also Matt. 10: 17—22.

13. *It shall turn to you for a testimony.* Your being brought to trial before the magistrates shall prove to you an occasion of bearing testimony for the Messiah, and vindicating his cause.

18. See note on p. 128.

19. *In your patience possess ye your souls. Patience,* in the Scriptures, often means *perseverance, continuance.* It was by a *persevering attachment* to the cause of their Master that the disciples would secure the salvation of their souls. See Matt. 24: 13.

20—24. See Matt. 24: 15—22.

21. *In the midst of it;* in the city Jerusalem. ‖ *In the countries;* the country, as distinguished from the city.

22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled.

23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.

24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

25 And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring;

26 Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.

27 And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory.

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22. *All things which are written.* Compare Matt. 24 : 15.

24. *Trodden down;* laid waste and profaned; as it were, trampled on; despoiled of its glory, and in the hands of Gentiles. ‖ *Until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;* until the time when God will punish the Gentiles, that is, the nations which should have sway over Jerusalem. For the meaning of this expression, compare Jer. 27 : 7. 50 : 31; also Ps. 37 : 13. Is. 13 : 22. The Saviour thus foretold that the Gentiles, who should trample down Jerusalem, would themselves be visited by the judgments of a holy God for their sins. But *when* this would take place he said not, as such information would rather gratify useless curiosity than contribute to any practical benefit. There seems also to have been another important reason for his using an indefinite expression, and not saying definitely *when* the punishment of the Gentiles would come, whether speedily or after a long time, whether in this world or in another. Some of the Jews entertained the opinion that the Messiah's reign would be ushered in by dreadful calamities, in the midst of which he would suddenly come forth for the protection and deliverance of the nation. Among these calamities they reckoned the devastation of the city and temple. But they cherished the belief that, under the protection of the Messiah, a more glorious city and temple would arise, worthy of the nation that was to be so highly distinguished as they expected to become. This opinion Jesus would not encourage; he therefore used a general expression, which would be applicable to any righteous retribution with which God might, at any time, visit the Gentiles. From the time of Jerusalem's being destroyed down to the present time, it has been under the dominion of nations other than Jews, and has never acquired its former splendor. It is now under the dominion of the Turks, and Mohammedan worship is maintained on ground once esteemed so holy.

25, 26. *Signs in the sun, &c.* A highly-wrought description of the distress which would immediately precede the taking of the city. Compare Matt. 24 : 29. ‖ *Upon the earth;* more strictly, the land, namely, Judea. See the note on Matt. 27 : 45. In Luke 4 : 25, the original word translated *land* is the same as the word here used. ‖ *Nations;* the tribes and people in Palestine. ‖ *The sea and the waves roaring.* The noise of waves is a figure expressing *distress* and *agitation of mind.* See Ps. 42 : 7. 88 : 7.

27. See Matt. 24 : 30.

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads: for your redemption draweth nigh.

29 And he spake to them a parable: Behold the fig-tree, and all the trees;

30 When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand.

31 So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand.

32 Verily, I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled.

33 Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

34 And take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and *so* that day come upon you unawares.

35 For as a snare shall it come on all them that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36 Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

37 And in the day-time he

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28. *Your redemption;* your deliverance from Jewish oppression.

29—33. See Matthew 24 : 32—35. *The kingdom of God is at hand;* the Messiah is on his way to establish his righteous cause, and to destroy the opposing Jewish power.

34—36. These verses present, in a very brief manner, the cautions and exhortations which are given at full length by Matthew in 24 : 42—51. 25 : 1—46. By reference to these passages in Matthew's Gospel, it will be seen that, in the exhortations to watchfulness, the Saviour appears to have passed onward in his mind, and to have connected his coming to destroy Jerusalem with another coming, namely, his coming at the end of the world to the general judgment. His exhortations in these passages have reference principally to that second coming, and are consequently applicable to all his followers. The brief summary here presented by Luke should, then, be explained in the same manner as those passages in Matthew; and, as it is the Saviour's coming to inflict judgment on his foes, and to award bliss to his disciples, that is spoken of, the language would naturally be so shaped as to be applicable to any coming of the Messiah, whether to take vengeance on the Jewish nation, and to rescue his followers from oppression and discouragement, or to call his disciples to another world by death, or to his coming to the general judgment. See on Matt. 24 : 42.

34. *That day.* The exhortation implied in the preceding words of this verse, and more fully exhibited by Matthew (24 : 42—51. 25 : 1—46), had brought to view *a day of account and of retribution.* That was *the day* here spoken of, and reference seems to be particularly made to the final judgment. Compare Matt. 7 : 22.

35. *As a snare;* unexpectedly, when men are not looking for it. Compare Matt. 24 : 50.

36. *Watch,* &c See Matt. 24 : 42. 25 : 13. ‖ *All these things that shall come to pass;* the woes that shall be inflicted on the wicked. ‖ *Stand before the Son of man;* stand accepted, be acquitted so as not to *fall* into condemnation. Compare Rom. 14 : 4. Ps. 1 : 5. 130 : 3.

37. *In the day-time — and at night.* This verse shows the manner in

was teaching in the temple; and at night he went out, and abode in the mount that is called *the mount* of Olives.

38 And all the people came early in the morning to him in the temple, for to hear him.

CHAPTER XXII.

NOW the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.

2 And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him: for they feared the people.

3 Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.

4 And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.

5 And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money.

6 And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.

7 Then came the day of unleavened bread, when the passover must be killed.

8 And he sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover, that we may eat.

9 And they said unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare?

10 And he said unto them, Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a man meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in.

11 And ye shall say unto the good man of the house, The Master saith unto thee, Where is the guest-chamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

12 And he shall show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready.

13 And they went and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

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which Jesus spent several days and nights during the short time which remained before his crucifixion. || *In the mount, &c.* He was in the habit, during this time, of retiring at night to Bethany, which was at the foot of the mount of Olives. See Matthew 21 : 17.

38. *Came early in the morning;* not merely on one occasion; but such was the practice of the people during these few remaining days.

CHAPTER XXII.

1, 2. Compare Matt. 26 : 1—5. *Feast of unleavened bread.* Another name for the *passover.* See Matt. 26 : 2.

3—6. Compare Matt. 26 : 6—16. *Then entered Satan into Judas.* A way of expressing the thought, that Satan excited Judas, or suggested to his mind the evil plan which Judas now went to prosecute. Evil thoughts and purposes, and temptations, are ascribed to the influence of Satan. See Acts 5 : 3.

4. *Captains.* There was a guard composed of Levites, who kept watch by night at the temple. The officers of this guard were the men here called *captains.*

7—14. Compare Matt. 26 : 17—20.

11. *The good man of the house;* the master of the family. See on Matt. 20 : 11. This person's servant, probably, it was whom the disciples should meet. || *Guest-chamber.* See on Mark 14 : 15.

14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer.

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves.

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

21 But behold, the hand of him that betrayeth me *is* with me on the table.

22 And truly the Son of man goeth as it was determined: but

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15. *With desire I have desired.* An intensive form of expression, signifying *I have very earnestly desired.* As this was to be the last celebration of the passover which Jesus should attend, and as it was to be so immediately connected with his sufferings, his thoughts naturally dwelt much on it; he wished that the time might arrive, and his sufferings be past. See on 12: 49, 50.

16. *Until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God;* until there be a more complete passover in heaven. That is, till I come to the complete, the perfect, joys of heaven. The passover-supper was a joyful celebration. Regarding it in this light, the Saviour remarked, that he should no more on earth enjoy a passover; but in heaven he should enjoy far more perfect bliss.

17. *The cup.* Reference is here had to the closing part of the passover-supper, at which wine was drunk.

18. *I will not drink, &c.* I shall no more drink wine, till the bliss of heaven comes. That is, This is the last time I shall drink wine at a passover with you, before I enter on the glories of heaven. Compare Matt. 26: 29.

19, 20. Compare Matt. 26: 26—28.

21—23. See Matt. 26: 21—25. A comparison of the passage referred to will show, that what Luke relates in these verses was actually said somewhat earlier than Luke places it; namely, *before* the instituting of the partaking of bread and wine in commemoration of our Lord's death. It is customary with Luke not to observe the exact order of events, but rather to unite together in his narration events which were somewhat similar in kind, though they did not occur in immediate connection. Thus, having been speaking of eating the paschal supper, he passes immediately to speak of the partaking of bread and wine in commemoration of the Saviour; and then goes back and relates a preceding conversation. The 23d verse of Luke mentions what, manifestly, according to the other evangelists, occurred before the time in which Luke seems to place it. By keeping in mind this manner of Luke, his statement is at once reconciled with that of John in 13: 30, who says that Judas retired from the Saviour's company immediately after having received his piece of food at the passover-supper, and therefore be-

woe unto that man by whom he is betrayed!

23 And they began to inquire among themselves, which of them it was that should do this thing.

24 And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.

25 And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors.

26 But ye *shall* not *be* so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve.

27 For whether *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? *is* not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth.

28 Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations;

29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me;

30 That ye may eat and drink

fore our Lord instituted the partaking of bread and wine in commemoration of his own death.

24. *A strife — accounted the greatest.* The views of the disciples respecting the temporal glory of the Messiah led to this unseasonable conversation respecting honors and offices. See on Matt. 18:1. It is questioned by some writers, whether the occurrence here related by Luke is a different one from that mentioned in Matt. 20:20—28. There is, indeed, much similarity in the Saviour's remarks presented by Matthew in the chapter referred to, and those presented by Luke in this place. Still a repetition of those remarks would not be unsuitable. It would seem, by comparing John 13:1—17, that there actually did arise occasion for the Saviour to check an aspiring temper on the part of the disciples; and both what John relates and the remarks presented by Luke might have referred to one and the same manifestation of worldly ambition. After the Saviour's resurrection, too, the disciples were not free from the erroneous notion of a temporal royalty to be exercised by the Messiah. See Acts 1:6.

25, 26. Compare Matt. 20:25—27. *Benefactors.* The word is here used as a title of honor, which was assumed by kings and others who possessed high authority, or who had conferred signal benefits on the state. It was of the same stamp as the title *father of his country*, denoting that the person who bore it had performed very signal services for his country. The Saviour forbade his apostles to aspire after external honors, and inculcated on them sincere humility.

26. *The younger.* The word thus rendered is sometimes employed with respect to *station*, rather than to *age*, and signifies *one in an inferior condition*, as distinguished from one who may be called *great*. ‖ *He that is chief;* he that has authority. ‖ *He that doth serve;* he that is a servant.

28—30. Compare Matt. 19:27—29. *Temptations;* sorrows, calamities.

29. *I appoint unto you a kingdom, &c.* A more exact translation would be — *And, as my Father hath appointed unto me a kingdom* [royal state], *I appoint unto you, that ye shall eat and drink, &c.*

30. *Eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, &c.*; ye shall be admitted to most intimate intercourse with me, as my royal officers, exercising kingly authority under me, the King Messiah. The language is expressive of exalted honor and bliss, to which the apostles should hereafter

at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

31 And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired *to have* you, that he may sift *you* as wheat:

32 But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

33 And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.

34 And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.

35 And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.

36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take *it*, and likewise *his* scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

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be elevated. The Saviour is presented as established in royal power, and surrounded by his apostles, among whom he distributes the administration of his government. Compare Matt. 19: 28.

31. *Satan hath desired to have you.* Satan, as being the author of temptations (see on v. 3), was represented as desiring to try the constancy of the apostles, just as he is represented as wishing to try the integrity of Job. See Job, chapters 1 and 2. || *That he may sift you as wheat.* After threshing, the grain and the chaff were exposed to a gentle wind, so that the kernels and pieces of earth, with grain cleaving to them, would fall on the ground. The grain was afterwards separated from the dust by the use of a sieve. This operation was a happy emblem of the calamities and trials by which men are agitated and proved. The idea, then, of the language is, *Severe trials await you.* The disciples could scarcely have met with a greater shock to their faith in Jesus, as the Messiah, than his arrest and crucifixion. In the remarks of the Saviour here presented, he included all his apostles.

32. *Converted;* returned to integrity. Peter's constancy would for a time sadly waver.

33, 34. Compare Matt. 26: 34, 35.

35. *And he said unto them.* Jesus still dwelt on the thought, and wished deeply to impress it on the apostles, that severe calamities and trials awaited them in his service, and that it became them to be making calculations to meet much hardship and ill-treatment. They ought to prepare themselves to meet with distresses, just as a man going a journey among those who would show him no special favors, ought to provide himself with a purse, and with provisions, and just as a man, expecting to go among deadly foes, would procure himself a weapon of defence. To sum up all in a few words, and words somewhat similar to those which our Lord employed, *they ought to be armed at all points*, for dangers were now about to thicken around them. || *When I sent you*, &c. See Matt. 10: 9, 10. On the mission which they performed at the time referred to, they found friends wherever they went, so that they had no special occasion then to prepare for calamities.

36. *But now*, &c. Now a different state of things exists. You are going to encounter enemies; difficulties will attend every step of your progress, and you must be prepared accordingly. Make all necessary preparation, and resemble, in this respect, a man well furnished with money, and provisions, and weapons of defence. || *Scrip.* See on Matt. 10: 10. || *Let him sell his garment and buy one;* by all means, become thorough-

37 For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.

38 And they said, Lord, behold, here *are* two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.

39 And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.

40 And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

41 And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done.

43 And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.

44 And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

45 And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,

46 And said unto them, Why

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ly prepared, prepared to encounter enemies: not, *literally*, buy a sword; but, as a man armed with a sword is prepared to encounter enemies, so be you *prepared* to encounter enemies. You will find much unfriendliness to my cause; you will meet with many foes; let your minds be prepared for this new state of things.

The Saviour here looked forward, probably, to the whole future course of his apostles, and contrasted it with the first mission on which he sent them, and on which they met with no serious hinderances. The troubles which would mark their future course were now about to begin, and to begin terribly: they ought to be *arming* themselves for the conflict. The language in which he expressed himself is figurative, containing allusions to the circumstances of their first mission, and to the manner in which men were accustomed to prepare for going among strangers and foes, expecting to encounter dangers.

37. *This that is written*, &c. See Is. 53: 12. ‖ *Have an end;* have their fulfilment. The things foretold concerning me are now taking place.

38. *Here are two swords.* The disciples did not understand Jesus. As he had just been speaking of dangers, they thought he was now speaking of *real swords.* Possibly they were in so agitated a state of mind as scarcely to consider what he meant, and they hastily replied that they had among them two swords. But, after all the instructions they had received from him, and their knowing how uniformly mild and peaceable was his character, and how abundant was his use of figurative language, they ought, it would seem, to have instantly perceived that he did not advise them to purchase a sword, *literally speaking.* ‖ *It is enough.* This was an expression used among the Hebrews, when a person wished to show disapprobation. It is as if Jesus had said, *No more on this subject; cease.* The same phrase, in reality, occurs in Deuteronomy 3: 26, where its meaning is obvious.

39—46. Compare Matt. 26: 30, 36—46.

43. *There appeared an angel*, &c. See on Matt. 26: 44.

44. *As it were, great drops of blood*, &c. See on Matt. 26: 45.

sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.

47 And while he yet spake, behold, a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him.

48 But Jesus said unto him, Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a kiss?

49 When they which were about him, saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?

50 And one of them smote a servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear.

51 And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.

52 Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders which were come to him, Be ye come out as against a thief, with swords and staves?

53 When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.

54 Then took they him, and led *him*, and brought him into the high priest's house. And Peter followed afar off.

55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, Peter sat down among them.

56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him.

57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not.

58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not.

59 And about the space of one hour after, another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this *fellow* also was with him; for he is a Galilean.

60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew.

61 And the Lord turned, and

47—53. Compare Matt. 26: 47—56.

49. *Shall we smite with the sword?* They recollected probably, but wholly misapprehended, what Jesus had said in v. 36.

50. *And one of them*, &c. Without waiting for a reply from his Master, Peter (see John 18: 10), in the fervor and rashness of his zeal, drew the sword.

51. *Suffer ye thus far.* Our Lord conveyed a strong rebuke to Peter, who had violently used the sword. See Matt. 26: 52. His language, as furnished by Luke, might be thus expressed: Desist ye; thus far [is already too much]—proceed no further with the sword; put it up. The words were spoken to the disciples.

52. *Captains of the temple.* See on v. 4.

53. *But this is your hour*, &c. This is the time in which God permits you to accomplish your purposes: this is the power over me, which the prince of darkness is permitted to exercise. Compare Matt. 26: 45, 56.

54—62. Compare Matt. 26: 57, 58, 69—75.

looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.

62 And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

63 And the men that held Jesus, mocked him, and smote *him*.

64 And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face, and asked him, saying, Prophesy, who is it that smote thee?

65 And many other things blasphemously spake they against him.

66 And as soon as it was day, the elders of the people, and the chief priests, and the scribes came together, and led him into their council,

67 Saying, Art thou the Christ? tell us. And he said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe.

68 And if I also ask *you*, ye will not answer me, nor let *me* go.

69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.

70 Then said they all, Art thou then the Son of God? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am.

71 And they said, What need we any further witness? for we ourselves have heard of his own mouth.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AND the whole multitude of them arose, and led him unto Pilate.

2 And they began to accuse him, saying, We found this *fellow* perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cesar, saying, that he himself is Christ, a king.

3 And Pilate asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answered him and said, Thou sayest *it*.

4 Then said Pilate to the chief priests, and *to* the people, I find no fault in this man.

5 And they were the more fierce, saying, He stirreth up the people, teaching throughout all Jewry, beginning from Galilee to this place.

6 When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether the man were a Galilean.

63—65. See Matt. 26: 67, 68.

66—71. See Matt. 26: 57, 59—66.

70. *Ye say that I am.* The words in the original might be thus translated — *Ye say it; for I am.* The expression *thou sayest*, or *ye say*, was equivalent among the Hebrews to an affirmative reply. Compare Matt. 26: 64. Mark 15: 2. The reply of Jesus then amounted to this: *Yes, I am.*

CHAPTER XXIII.

1. See Matt. 27: 1, 2.

2—5. Compare Matt. 27: 11—14. John 18: 28—38.

4. *I find no fault*, &c. See John 18: 38.

5. *Perverting;* drawing away, that is, from obedience to Cesar, the Roman emperor, to whom the Jews were subject. This was an accusation to which Pilate, the Roman governor, might well be supposed willing to hearken. ‖ *Stirreth up the people*, exciteth them to revolt from Cesar. ‖ *Jewry;* the country of the Jews.

7 And as soon as he knew that he belonged unto Herod's jurisdiction, he sent him to Herod, who himself was also at Jerusalem at that time.

8 And when Herod saw Jesus, he was exceeding glad: for he was desirous to see him of a long *season*, because he had heard many things of him; and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him.

9 Then he questioned with him in many words; but he answered him nothing.

10 And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him.

11 And Herod with his men of war set him at nought, and mocked *him*, and arrayed him in a gorgeous robe, and sent him again to Pilate.

12 And the same day Pilate and Herod were made friends together; for before they were at enmity between themselves.

13 And Pilate, when he had called together the chief priests, and the rulers, and the people,

14 Said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me, as one that perverteth the people: and behold, I, having examined *him* before you, have found no fault in this man, touching those things whereof ye accuse him;

15 No, nor yet Herod: for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing worthy of death is done unto him:

16 I will therefore chastise him, and release *him*.

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7. *Herod's jurisdiction.* See on Matt. 27: 14. Herod Antipas was at that time tetrarch of Galilee. See 13: 31. As Jesus had been an inhabitant of Galilee rather than of Judea, there was a propriety in referring his case to Herod. The Roman law gave also to the governors of the provinces the right of trying offences committed within their jurisdiction. Thus Pilate also could lawfully attend to the case of Jesus; for the accusation against him was that, from Galilee to Jerusalem, and therefore within the dominions of Pilate, he had been exciting the people to revolt. ‖ *Who himself was also at Jerusalem.* At the festival of the passover, people went to Jerusalem from all quarters.

8. *He was desirous to see him of a long season.* See Luke 9: 9.

9. *Answered him nothing.* Because he knew that Herod would only deride him. Herod had no real desire to understand the case, and to do justice in respect to it. His questions were doubtless of such a character as to render replies either unnecessary or useless.

11. *His men of war;* the troops whom he had as a body-guard. ‖ *Mocked him;* scoffed at him. They regarded him, probably, as a poor, deluded impostor, who had at last sunk into disrepute, and whom they might safely insult. ‖ *Gorgeous robe;* a splendid, and probably white, garment, such as was worn by men who aspired, as candidates, to offices in the state. By throwing such a garment on Jesus, they marked him as an object of contempt, as one who had aspired to great dignity, but who was now shamefully defeated.

15. *Nothing worthy of death is done unto him.* More accurately, *nothing worthy of death has been done by him.* The examination before Herod detected no crime in him worthy of death.

16. *I will therefore chastise him, &c.* Pilate proposed at this time to scourge Jesus, in hope that this comparatively mild punishment would appease the people, so that they would

17 (For of necessity he must release one unto them at the feast.)

18 And they cried out all at once, saying, Away with this *man*, and release unto us Barabbas:

19 (Who, for a certain sedition made in the city, and for murder, was cast into prison.)

20 Pilate, therefore, willing to release Jesus, spake again to them.

21 But they cried, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify him.

22 And he said unto them the third time, Why, what evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him; I will therefore chastise him, and let *him* go.

23 And they were instant with loud voices, requiring that he might be crucified: and the voices of them and of the chief priests prevailed.

24 And Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they required.

25 And he released unto them him that for sedition and murder was cast into prison, whom they had desired; but he delivered Jesus to their will.

26 And as they led him away, they laid hold upon one Simon a Cyrenian, coming out of the country, and on him they laid the cross, that he might bear *it* after Jesus.

27 And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him.

28 But Jesus, turning unto them, said, Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

29 For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed *are* the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.

30 Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us.

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be willing to release him. Pilate saw clearly, that Jesus was an innocent man, and that the chief priests and other distinguished men were resolved on his being put to death; but he hoped that, by allowing Jesus to be scourged, he might operate on their sensibility, and prevent the extremity to which they were rushing. But his efforts were unavailing. The scourging which Jesus afterwards received was the usual one, which was administered as preliminary to crucifixion. See Matt. 27 : 26.

17—25. See Matt. 27 : 15—26.

26. Compare Matt. 27 : 32.

29. *The days are coming in the which*, &c.; days of bitter distress, in which *mothers* particularly will endure heart-rending anguish, such will be the sufferings of their children, and such the incumbrances connected with having a family. Compare Matt. 24 : 19. On *mothers*, the sufferings connected with the siege and capture of Jerusalem must have fallen with peculiar weight.

30. *Begin to say to the mountains*, &c. A very vivid way of expressing the thought, Death will be chosen rather than life. The mountains and hills in and around Palestine had extensive caverns, favorable for concealment in a time of danger. The people who might flee to these caverns, are represented as there lamenting

31 For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

32 And there were also two others, malefactors, led with him to be put to death.

33 And when they were come to the place which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors; one on the right hand, and the other on the left.

34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots.

35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided *him*, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God.

36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar,

37 And saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself.

38 And a superscription also was written over him, in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

39 And one of the malefactors, which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us.

40 But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not

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the sad fate of their country, and desiring to be crushed by the falling of the mountains rather than to survive their country's ruin, and to encounter the miseries which would await them.

31. *For if they do these things in a green tree, &c.* A green, flourishing tree was employed among the Hebrews as an emblem of a righteous man. See Ps. 1: 3. A dry, dead tree, on the contrary, was an emblem of a wicked, worthless man. See Ezek. 20: 47, compared with 21: 3. This use of the terms gave rise to the proverbial saying, which Jesus repeated; the meaning of which was, If a righteous man is subjected to such calamities as I am now enduring, what ought not the wicked to expect? The phrase *if they do these things* is equivalent to the phrase *if these things be done.*

32, 33. Compare Matt. 27: 38. *Calvary.* See on Matt. 27: 33.

34. *They know not what they do;* they know not what a crime they are committing; they are acting inconsiderately. Thus the Saviour sincerely prayed for those who had been accessory to his crucifixion, and wished, as far as possible, to extenuate their guilt. The Roman soldiers, who had needlessly and wantonly abused him, and the common people of the Jews, were, properly speaking, instigated by others, in their ill-treatment of Jesus. The chief priests, too, and other distinguished men of the nation, who were so resolute against Jesus, might, in an important sense, be said not to know the extent of their guilt. They had, however, no sufficient apology for any of their ill speeches and ill conduct in respect to the Saviour. Compare Acts 3: 17. 1 Cor. 2: 8. All who bore any responsibility in the Saviour's condemnation, and who inflicted on him any indignities, were probably referred to in this petition. Compare Matt. 5: 44, 45. Acts 7: 60. ‖ *They parted his raiment*, &c. Compare Matt. 27: 35.

35—37. See Matt. 27: 39—43. *If he be Christ;* if he be the Messiah.

38. See Matt. 27: 37.

39—43. Compare Matt. 27: 44. *Hanged.* The word used in the original was applied to persons who were crucified. ‖ *Christ;* the Messiah.

thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily, I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise.

44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour.

45 And the sun was darkened, and the vail of the temple was rent in the midst.

46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost.

47 Now, when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

48 And all the people that came together to that sight, beholding the things which were done, smote their breasts and returned.

49 And all his acquaintance, and the women that followed him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things.

50 And behold, *there was* a man named Joseph, a counsellor: *and he was* a good man, and a just:

51 (The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them:) *he was* of Arimathea, a city of the Jews; who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.

52 This *man* went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus.

53 And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid.

54 And that day was the preparation, and the Sabbath drew on.

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42. *When thou comest into thy kingdom.* This man fully believed that Jesus was the Messiah, and that the present calamities of Jesus would be succeeded by a state of glory. Without, perhaps, having any very definite view of the kind of glory which Jesus would possess, or of the time when Jesus, as the Messiah, would enter on his glorious reign, he besought that, whenever Jesus should enter on that state, he might be kindly remembered. His desire was, to partake of the glory and bliss which the Messiah would bestow on his subjects, though he felt and acknowledged himself wholly unworthy, and deserving the punishment which he was at that time enduring. He was evidently a penitent.

43. *Paradise.* This word, which originally signified *a garden*, came to be applied to *the garden of Eden*, and was subsequently used as the name of *the abode of the blessed after death.*

44—46. Compare Matt. 27: 45, 46, 50. *Over all the earth;* all the land. See Matt. 27: 45.

45. *Vail of the temple.* See Matt. 27: 51.

47—54. Compare Matt. 27: 54—61.

51. *Waited for the kingdom of God;* expected with some degree of a proper spirit the Messiah's times, and was well disposed towards Jesus. Compare 2: 38.

55 And the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid.

56 And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath-day, according to the commandment.

CHAPTER XXIV.

NOW upon the first *day* of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain *others* with them.

2 And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.

3 And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.

4 And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments.

5 And as they were afraid, and bowed down *their* faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?

6 He is not here, but is risen. Remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

7 Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.

8 And they remembered his words,

9 And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest.

10 It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary *the mother* of James, and other *women that were* with them, which told these things unto the apostles.

11 And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not.

12 Then arose Peter, and ran unto the sepulchre, and stooping down, he beheld the linen clothes laid by themselves, and departed, wondering in himself at that which was come to pass.

13 And behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together*, and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

55, 56. *Rested the Sabbath-day.* See on Matt. 28 : 1.

CHAPTER XXIV.

1—11. See Matt. 28 : 1—8.

10. *Joanna.* See Luke 8 : 3. ‖ *Mary, the mother of James.* See Matt. 27 : 56.

12. Compare John 20 : 3—10.

13. *Two of them;* of those mentioned in v. 9. See Mark 16 :

12. ‖ *Emmaus;* a village generally thought to have been north of Jerusalem. ‖ *Threescore furlongs;* about seven and a half of our miles. These two men might have been returning home from the passover. The festival-week was not, indeed, completed; but in their agitated and sorrowful state of mind, they would prefer to be at home.

16 But their eyes were holden, that they should not know him.

17 And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18 And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering, said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

19 And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20 And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21 But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and besides all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

22 Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre.

23 And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

24 And certain of them which were with us, went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25 Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

26 Ought not Christ to have

16. *Their eyes were holden.* Divine providence so ordered circumstances, that these persons did not perceive that it was Jesus himself who had come up to them. His appearance was in some respects altered. See Mark 16: 12. God was designing to impart to their minds some new views of his word; and this could be best done by not letting them at once know who their companion was. In some way, unknown to us, they were kept from suspecting that their companion was their own Lord and Master.

21. *Should have redeemed Israel;* was to deliver the Jews from the Roman power, and from all their miseries. See on 1: 71—75. ‖ *Besides all this, to-day is the third day, &c.* In addition to these things being matters of public notoriety, they took place three days ago; and one would think that even a stranger in Jerusalem must have heard of them.

24. *Were with us;* were of our company.

25. *Fools.* Several words which to us appear harsh, and bordering on reproach and contempt, did not appear thus to the Jews in their conversation. Though the Saviour intended to rebuke these disciples, as he often rebuked his apostles, for dulness of apprehension in respect to religious truth, he yet did not speak in terms of contempt. He was not so understood by them. The term *fools* corresponded to some such term as *ignorant, unreflecting men.* All such words are very considerably affected, also, in their meaning by *the manner* of speaking, and by *the expression of the countenance.* ‖ *Slow of heart to believe;* not readily believing.

26. *Ought not Christ, &c.* Was it not necessary and proper — was it not to have been expected, according to the prophets, that the Messiah should suffer, &c.?

suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27 And beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.

28 And they drew nigh unto the village whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further.

29 But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

30 And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it*, and brake, and gave to them.

31 And their eyes were opened, and they knew him: and he vanished out of their sight.

32 And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?

33 And they rose up the same hour, and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,

34 Saying, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon.

35 And they told what things *were done* in the way, and how he was known of them in breaking of bread.

36 And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst

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28. *He made as though he would have gone further.* Not that he deceived them, but he gave them no intimation that he would stop, and he seemed to be continuing his journey, waiting for them to invite him to tarry with them. Without such an invitation, he would have gone further.

29. *They constrained him;* by their earnest entreaty.

30. *He took bread,* &c. This was usually performed by the master of the family, except when he declined in favor of some distinguished guest, whom, for the time, he appointed, as it were, the head of the company. Jesus performed this service in order to attract attention to himself, as their Master. ‖ *Brake.* See on Matt. 14: 17.

31. *And their eyes were opened,* &c. Whatever the circumstances were which had hindered their recognizing him up to this time (see v. 16), either those circumstances were removed, or, notwithstanding them, they perceived most convincing evidence that their guest was their Master. ‖ *He vanished out of their sight.* He suddenly disappeared. Whether he miraculously made himself invisible, is not decided by the language employed. Perhaps, while these two persons were filled with amazement, not knowing what to think or say at their discovery, Jesus suddenly and abruptly departed from them. We sometimes say of a person who suddenly departs from the company in which he had been, that *he disappeared.*

32. *Burn within us;* with interest and joy at his instructions.

33. *Saying.* This word refers to "the eleven," &c. mentioned in the preceding verse, whom these two persons found talking together about an appearance of their Master to Simon Peter. From Mark 16: 13, it appears that the principal part of the company here spoken of were not yet convinced that Jesus had arisen.

36. *Jesus himself stood in the midst of them;* presented himself suddenly among them.

of them, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

37 But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit.

38 And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts?

39 Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have.

40 And when he had thus spoken, he showed them *his* hands and *his* feet.

41 And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat?

42 And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of a honeycomb.

43 And he took *it*, and did eat before them.

44 And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.

45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures,

46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48 And ye are witnesses of these things.

49 And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

50 And he led them out as

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41. *Believed not for joy.* Just as almost every one says, when some astonishing event, of a most joyful character, is related to him, "Is it possible? It cannot be; I am certainly dreaming. Surely, I am deceived." And we are not surprised, if he withholds his belief till a more calm state of mind has ensued, or confirmation on confirmation is given, as it was in the present instance.

44. *These are the words, &c.* The events which have now taken place, namely, my death and resurrection, are in accordance with the instructions which I gave while I was with you, before I was crucified, when I insisted that all the things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, &c.

45. *Then opened he their understanding, &c* He specially enlightened them by a divine influence. Compare Acts 16: 14. The instructions which Jesus proceeded to give, and of which Luke furnishes a summary in the following verses, were doubtless imparted at various times during the Saviour's forty days' stay on earth after his resurrection. See Acts 1: 3.

46. *It behoved;* it was necessary and proper. ‖ *Christ;* the Messiah.

49. *I send the promise of my Father;* I will bestow on you that which my Father has promised. He referred to the Holy Spirit, by whose influences the apostles were to become thoroughly qualified to be the Messiah's ambassadors and representatives. See John 14: 16, 17, 26. 15: 26. 16: 7, 13, 14. ‖ *Tarry ye, &c.* Compare Acts 1: 8. 2: 4.

50, 51. See Mark 16: 19.

far as to Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

51 And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

52 And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy;

53 And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen.

52. *And they worshipped him;* they bowed down in token of homage. See also Acts 1: 11. The circumstances show that more than civil respect was paid to Jesus by the apostles on this occasion. They had received much instruction from him since his resurrection, and their views respecting him had become much enlarged and corrected. Their reverence for their Master had greatly increased; and when, after so much elevating and endearing intercourse, they saw him (Acts 1: 9, 10) rising to heaven, to take his station at the right hand of God, they felt and expressed such love, and reverence, and confidence, as well deserved the name of *worship*. And well may WE respond our hearty AMEN. And let "every creature which is in heaven and on the earth, say, Blessing and honor, and glory and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever." Rev. 5: 13.

NOTE ON LUKE 21: 18, p. 110. *There shall not a hair, &c.* These words contain a promise of special divine protection. Compare Acts 27: 34. The followers of Christ, as a collective body, would enjoy such protection; and though some of them might suffer death (v. 16) yet even *they* would meet with no real loss. Their eternal welfare would be secured.

PREFACE

TO THE

GOSPEL OF JOHN.

JOHN was a son of Zebedee, and was associated with his father in the occupation of fishing on the lake Gennesaret. See Matt. 4: 21. Mark 1: 19, 20. His mother's name was Salome. Compare Matt. 27: 56 with Mark 16: 1. From the manner of expression in the first chapter of John's Gospel, vs. 35 and 40, there is reason to believe that he was a disciple of John the Baptist, and that he was among the first who welcomed Jesus as the Messiah. Between him and the Saviour there seems to have existed a peculiar mutual intimacy. See John 13: 23, 24. 19: 26, 27. Though, on one occasion, he was betrayed into an unworthy fervor of feeling through a mistaken zeal for the honor of his Master (Luke 9: 54), yet his general character partook largely of the benevolence which was so conspicuous in Jesus himself. He also manifested, on two other occasions, an unholy, ambitious selfishness (Mark 9: 38. Matt. 20: 20, 21, compared with Mark 10: 35), which yielded, at length, in the maturity of his religious character, to humility and fraternal love. The other notices of him which are found in the New Testament, prove his steady and zealous devotion to the cause of his Master. See Acts 3: 1. 4: 13, 19, 20. 8: 14, 25. Gal. 2: 9. Rev. 1: 9. The accounts which have been handed down from the earliest times, after the writings of the New Testament, bear testimony to his unwearied assiduity in promoting the welfare of the churches, and

cherishing the spirit of brotherly love among the followers of Christ. I cannot prevail on myself to omit the interesting anecdote which has been so often told, but which never loses its freshness. "When John was far advanced in age, he was too feeble to walk to the meetings. He suffered himself then to be carried in by his disciples. Being unable to speak much, he repeated continually the words, 'Little children, love one another.' And when it was asked why he always repeated these words alone, he replied, 'Because such is the commandment of the Lord, and because it is sufficient, if this is done.'" He lived beyond the age of ninety years, and died a natural death at Ephesus, in Asia Minor.

From the earliest dates of Christianity, John has been acknowledged as the author of this Gospel. It was written the last of the four Gospels in the order of time, and probably not long before the year 70 of the Christian era. It is believed to have been written in Ephesus. Its explanations of Jewish terms (see, for instance, 1: 38, 41. 6: 4) indicate that it was written at some distance from Palestine; for such explanations would not be needed in the very country of the Jews.

The Gospel of John differs materially in its structure from the other Gospels. It is not so much a record of facts, as a record of the Saviour's discourses and conversations. The events which John relates seem to have been recorded mostly in order to introduce the conversations, or discourses, to which they gave rise; and such a selection was made from our Lord's discourses as would most amply illustrate the dignity of Jesus Christ as the Saviour of men, and THE SON OF GOD, not only by his office, but also by his possessing a divine nature. The mind of John was deeply impressed with a sense of the unspeakable excellence and glory of the Saviour; and he wished to convey to his readers the same impression.

GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

CHAPTER I.

IN the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

CHAPTER I.

1. *In the beginning.* Compare Gen. 1:1. The connection clearly shows, that these words relate to the beginning *of the creation*, or to the period when the world was not yet brought into existence. It is equivalent to the expression *when the world began*, and carries back our minds to the very commencement of time. ‖ *The Word.* By this term, the evangelist designates Christ as existing *in a spiritual nature*, before time began. Previously to our Saviour's coming into this world, he existed (see 17: 5, 24) in a purely spiritual nature. To designate him in *that* nature, not yet as a partaker of human nature, John employed this term. Why he selected this particular term, we are unable to say with perfect confidence; nor is it necessary, since he clearly uses it as a *kind of proper name* applied to Christ in his preëxistent state. That Christ was meant, is plain from the fourteenth verse, and from the mention of John the Baptist as bearing witness of him (vs. 6—8). The term in the Greek language corresponding to *word*, had been employed by some Greek and Jewish philosophers, in their speculations respecting the Deity, to signify a being whom they supposed to exist, of a very exalted nature, and holding a very intimate relation to the Deity. Their speculations had occasioned the term *Word* to be extensively known in conversations and discussions about the Deity. Among the Jews in general, also, a term corresponding to *Word* had come into frequent use as signifying that exalted Being who is described in the Old Testament as appearing to the patriarchs and other distinguished men, and who used language respecting himself appropriate to the Deity. That Being they generally believed to have been *the Messiah* in his preëxistent state of glory, thus occasionally revealing himself to his people for instruction and consolation, and anticipating the manifestation which he was, in after ages, to make to the nation. Thus it happened that this term was very widely diffused as a religious term, and as particularly referring either to Him who was to be the Messiah, or to an exalted spiritual nature conceived to exist in very intimate connection with the Deity. When, then, John was about to speak of the Messiah, in his spiritual nature, as existing before time began, and as most intimately connected with the Deity, and as possessing attributes and performing deeds appropriate to the Deity, the term *Word* would naturally occur to his mind. There had, indeed, been connected with that term various erroneous notions; but John could avoid the sanctioning of those errors, by giving himself a description of Him to whom he applied it. While the *term*, then, was derived from common use, the nature and character of the Being expressed by that term must be learned from John's own description. ‖ *The Word was with God;* was intimately united with God.

It may be interesting to notice, that the term *Word* is applied by John to Christ not only in his state of existence before time began, but

2 The same was in the beginning with God.
3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.
4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

also in his state of glory after having finished his work on earth. See Rev. 19: 13—16.

2. *The same was in the beginning with God.* This is a repetition of the sentiment contained in the preceding verse, with the additional thought that the intimate union of the Word with God existed before time began.

3. *All things were made by him.* Compare Col. 1: 16. ‖ *Not any thing.* The thought just expressed is repeated with more particularity. Nothing at all, not even one thing of all that had been made, was made without him.

The work of creation is appealed to in the Scriptures as clearly proving its author to be the true God. See Ps. 96: 5. Jer. 10: 11, 16. Heb. 3: 4. Hence this assertion that "all things were made by him," agrees exactly with the declaration in the first verse — "the Word was God."

The statement made in this verse has sometimes been regarded as not wholly compatible with the remark in Heb. 1: 2, in which God is said to have made the worlds *by his Son.* But there is no inconsistency between the two statements. The testimony of the Bible is, that creation is the work of Deity. According to the Bible, the Deity is such that the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, may severally be spoken of as possessing divine attributes and performing divine works. Hence there is no contradiction between the two declarations, *Jehovah created the world,* and, *The Word created the World.* In perfect consistency too, it may be said, *The Word created the world,* and, *Jehovah created the world by the Word.*

4. *In him was life.* The term *life* has frequently in the Scriptures a very extensive import, referring to *spiritual and eternal happiness,* as well as to natural life; and when spoken of as *being in God,* or *Christ,* it signifies *the power of imparting* such life. Here, Christ, in his spiritual, divine nature, is declared to be *the source of life;* the word *life* being understood in its most comprehensive sense. He had just been spoken of as the creator of all things; he is now declared to have been the source or author of all life, natural and spiritual; to have had in himself a life-giving power; to have been the source of all real good, both in respect to the present world and to the eternal world. ‖ *The life was the light of men.* The term *light,* used metaphorically, includes the ideas of *knowledge* and *happiness.* The *knowledge* meant, in the Scriptures, by this term, is *divine knowledge,* authentic instruction respecting God and eternity; the *happiness* meant by the term *light* is that which results from a hearty reception of such instruction and a ready obedience to it; in other words, *spiritual and eternal happiness,* or *salvation.* Now, the life-giving power which dwelt in Christ, is here represented as a fountain of *knowledge* and *happiness* to men. In other phraseology, The Word, who possessed in himself the source of all life, the ability to impart life both for time and for eternity, bestowed knowledge and salvation; became THE LIGHT of men by the religious *truth* which he revealed, and by the *salvation* which he procured for them.

5. *The light shineth in darkness.* The word *darkness,* used figuratively, signifies *ignorance of divine truth,* and the *misery consequent on such ignorance, and on sin.* The term is here employed as designating *men who are in a state of ignorance and misery.* To the world, enveloped in ignorance and misery, Christ came as *a light;* or, to express the same thought in different words, on the world, wrapped in the darkness of

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.

7 The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.

8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.

9 *That* was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

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ignorance and sin, THE LIGHT from heaven shone to dispel *the darkness*, and to bring in *the day* of knowledge, of holiness, and of happiness. ‖ *And the darkness;* those who were in darkness; the world enveloped in ignorance and spiritual misery. ‖ *Comprehended it not;* did not receive it. Men, in their ignorance and sin, did not give a cordial welcome to Christ, when he came to bestow knowledge and bliss. Special reference was probably made to the Jews; but both Jews and Gentiles may be included in this declaration. It was, and it is, a general truth that the Messiah's religion, as to its doctrines and precepts, the kind of happiness which it proposes, and the manner of attaining that happiness, does not accord with the inclinations of men.

6. *A man sent from God;* specially commissioned from above. Compare Luke 1 : 11—17. 3 : 2. Matt. 3 : 1—3. John the Baptist is here introduced as having borne testimony to Christ. By referring to the testimony of John the Baptist, the evangelist clearly shows to what person he was referring in the preceding verses, and distinguishes Christ, who was, in the highest sense, THE LIGHT of the world, from all other religious teachers and benefactors.

7. *Of the Light.* The special object for which John was commissioned was to announce the coming of the Messiah, to point him out to the people, and to direct the people to him as the giver of divine knowledge and true bliss. ‖ *That all men through him,* &c.; that there might be a general reception of the Messiah. Compare Luke 1 : 17.

8. *He was not that Light.* The writer carefully distinguishes between John, who was the forerunner of the Saviour, and the Saviour himself, who was the author of bliss, and the great revealer of true knowledge. He was anxious that there should be no mistake in regard to the person whom he was describing.

9. *Which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.* A broad distinction is here pointed out between John, the forerunner, and Christ, the real Saviour. John was sent to announce the coming of the Messiah, to bear testimony to him, and to labor for preparing the Jewish people to receive him. His office was restricted to the Jewish nation. However honorable the commission which was entrusted to him (see Matt. 11 : 11), yet he was appointed to act in a narrow sphere. The real Saviour, on the contrary, had a more ample field. Not for the Jews only, but for *the human race,* did he come as a dispenser of religious light and eternal life. His mission was intended not, as was that of John, for any *one* nation, but for *all* nations; not for any *one* class of men, but for *all* men, so that to every one the Saviour was intended to bear a most important relation; and every one may, through him, obtain eternal life. The word *lighteth* is equivalent to the phrase *blesseth with divine knowledge and spiritual happiness.* The phrase *that cometh into the world* is regarded by the best judges of the original language as properly referring, not to the word *man,* but to the word *Light,* so that the idea expressed by the verse is this: *That was the true Light which, coming into the world, lighteth every man.* The phrase *He that cometh into the world* was used as designating the Messiah. See John 11 : 27. Matt. 11 : 3. Compare, too, John 3 : 19

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the

10. *The world was made by him.* See v. 3. ‖ *Knew him not;* did not acknowledge him in his true character. The remark is here a general one in respect to the spirit in which the Saviour and his religion were met by human beings. In the very world which he had made he was not acknowledged. This thought is, in the next verse, more particularly expressed, namely, as having reference to the Jews.

11. *Unto his own;* his own possessions. The Jewish nation and country were peculiarly his own; — they were separated from all others, to be a peculiar property of Jehovah. The Jews were expecting the Messiah, in accordance with oft-repeated promises from God. The Saviour arose from among them. ‖ *But his own;* his own people; those who might be peculiarly called his own family. Even they rejected him. In the world which himself had made he was not acknowledged; even by his own people he was not received; and that though he came as a Light, a glorious Saviour.

12. *As many as received him.* Though he was opposed by so many that it might truly be said, He was despised and rejected of men, yet there were those who acknowledged him as the true Messiah, and became his followers. ‖ *Power.* The word thus rendered, expresses also the idea of *right.* ‖ *The sons of God;* those who enjoy the special favor of God, as his people, and who are treated with peculiar affection by him. The Jews claimed that they only of all nations were the people of God, on account of his promises and his dispensations. Compare Deut. 14: 1,2. They gloried in this distinction, and looked with contempt on other nations. The evangelist asserted, in opposition to this vain boasting of the Jews, that *the right* of sustaining such a relation to God was given to *the followers of the Messiah.* While those, who, in respect to national relation, had been regarded as the Messiah's people and the sons of God, had rejected the Messiah, those, on the contrary, to whatsoever nation they belonged, who received him, would be honored with the right of being the true sons of God, and of enjoying that dignity to which the Jewish nation arrogantly laid claim. The word translated *power* is also by some considered as equivalent to the word *privilege.* ‖ *Believe on his name;* believe on him.

13. The evangelist proceeded to distinguish the sonship to which the followers of Christ were entitled, from that to which the Jews laid claim. The dignity and happiness of being children of God, which the Messiah's followers enjoyed, proceeded not from natural descent, but peculiarly from God. *Which were born;* who had become sons of God. ‖ *Not of blood,* &c.; not by natural birth, not by blood-relationship to certain ancestors, as, for instance, Abraham. ‖ *Of God.* It is a new, spiritual life, which characterizes the real children of God, in distinction from the natural relation to Abraham, on which the Jews relied; and this spiritual life is imparted by God.

In the view of a Jew, there was no greater distinction than *to be children,* or *sons, of God.* This term contained in it ideas of consummate dignity and bliss. Yet John declared, in extolling the benefits bestowed on the Messiah's followers, that it was to *them,* and them *only,* that the right of being the true children of God per-

flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only-begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.

15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me, is preferred before me; for he was before me.

16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.

17 For the law was given by

tained; they having received from God a new spiritual life, by which they resemble God. Not to the Jews, as descendants from Abraham, but to those who believed in Christ, and received him as the great Teacher and Saviour, did the dignity pertain of being sons of God.

REMARKS. 1. True faith in Christ implies a receiving of him and a submitting to him, as the teacher and Saviour of men. It will produce a sincere obedience to his instructions, and a holy life.

2. To be born of God is different from an external change of conduct, or of condition. It is a change of character in respect to God, making us resemble him; it is particularly manifested by our believing in Christ, receiving him as our Saviour, and regulating our hearts and lives by his religion.

3. We are not children of God by our natural birth. It is by his own influence on our souls, leading us to trust in Christ and obey him, that we become children of God.

Are *we* cherishing towards God such love, and fear, and obedience, as are possessed by his affectionate and dutiful children?

14. *Was made flesh;* became a man, assumed the human nature. Compare 1 Tim. 3: 16. Heb. 2: 14. ‖ *Among us;* among men, particularly his disciples. ‖ *His glory;* his glorious qualities, the assemblage of his excellences, exhibited in his character and works, particularly in his condescending goodness to man. ‖ *As of the only-begotten of the Father;* as of one who was in deed and truth *the Son of God*, possessing a nature like God's (as a son possesses his father's nature), and manifesting divine excellence (compare Heb. 1: 3). He stood forth, distinct from all others, possessing qualities which pertain not to an ordinary man; he was *the only one* who can truly be called *the Son of God.* The idea of the writer is, that THE WORD, though having assumed human nature, and dwelling in a most familiar manner among men, as a real human being, did yet show forth such glory, in his character and acts, as indicated a nature superior to man's, a nature like God's. The glorious goodness which he displayed was such as became THE ONLY SON OF GOD. Though dwelling among men in feeble human nature, he yet gave decided indications of being more than a son of man; through the vail of his human nature there beamed forth the radiance of the divine nature. ‖ *Full of grace and truth;* full of favor, or benefits, for men, and richly communicating truth respecting God's merciful designs; full of true, genuine love to men.

15. *Cried;* proclaimed. ‖ *Is preferred before me;* is superior to me. ‖ *For he was before me.* Reference is here made to the fact, that Christ existed previously to his appearing on earth.

16. *Of his fulness have all we received;* from the abundance of blessings which he possesses, all his followers receive a supply. ‖ *Grace for grace;* favor after favor; an endless succession of benefits.

17. *The law;* the system of religion communicated in the Old Testament; the dispensation established by the agency of Moses. ‖ *Grace*

Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.

19 And this is the record of

and truth; the true love of God. The law of Moses and the gospel of Christ are here contrasted, in order to illustrate the succession of the divine benefits. The people of God, in ancient times, enjoyed a rich blessing under the Mosaic dispensation; but a far richer blessing came when that dispensation was superseded by the clearer manifestation of God's saving love through Jesus Christ. Compare Heb. 1 : 1, 2.

18. *No man.* To no human being has such a knowledge of God been imparted as would enable him to make the disclosures which are contained in the gospel; it was THE ONLY SON OF GOD, he who enjoyed a most intimate and a perfect knowledge of the Father, that was competent fully to reveal the purposes and plans of God. Compare Matt. 11 : 27. The system of divine love revealed in the gospel is immensely superior to the revelation by Moses and the prophets, inasmuch as it was given by Him who enjoys the most intimate acquaintance with the Father. ‖ *Hath seen God;* hath had a complete knowledge of God. Since so much of our knowledge is acquired by sight, *to see* means frequently *to know, to be acquainted with.* ‖ *The only-begotten Son.* See on v. 14. ‖ *Which is in the bosom of the Father;* he who has been most intimately acquainted with the Father, and cherished by him with the utmost affection as a *bosom-friend.* Compare the expression in v. 1 — *The Word was* WITH *God.* The manner of expression is drawn from the Eastern custom of reclining. The head of a person could be placed on the bosom of one next him, if he wished for private, confidential conversation. See Luke 16 : 22. ‖ *Declared him;* revealed him, disclosed his purposes for the salvation of men.

The first eighteen verses of this chapter compose the preface by which John introduced his Gospel to his readers. This preface is fitted to inspire us with profound reverence for Christ, and with an exalted opinion of the revelation which he has made, and of the benefits which he bestows on his followers. This preface alludes to the testimony borne by John the Baptist to Jesus Christ, as the promised Messiah. In proceeding now to relate the acts and the discourses of Jesus, the evangelist distinctly mentions several occasions on which John the Baptist had borne his testimony.

19. *The record of John;* the testimony which John bore. ‖ *The Jews;* those Jews in Jerusalem who possessed the proper authority, namely, the Sanhedrim, the highest court among the Jews, and that which exercised a general superintendence, particularly over religious affairs. ‖ *Priests and Levites.* The descendants of Levi were set apart for the services of religion. Aaron and his posterity were appointed to the priesthood; the other families of the tribe of Levi were charged with the other services which the religious ceremonial required. See Num. 1 : 50—53. As John the Baptist had attracted much attention among the people (see Matt. 3 : 5), and appeared to be establishing a new order of religious things in the nation, the Sanhedrim would naturally seek information respecting his claims. They wished for the Messiah's coming as well as the great body of the people. They desired it, however, for civil purposes, that the nation might be rescued from the Roman yoke, rather than for religious purposes, that they might be delivered from the bondage of sin. Their own popularity, too, they might fear, would be diminished by the impression which John was making on the people. Wishing to know

John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem, to ask him, Who art thou?

20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.

21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.

22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?

23 He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.

24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that

in what capacity John claimed to have come (compare Luke 3: 15), they sent, in order to make inquiry, some of the priests and Levites, men devoted to the religious affairs of the nation.

20. *He confessed, and denied not; but confessed.* By this varied form of expression, the evangelist intended to show that John the Baptist made a prompt and open acknowledgment. ‖ *The Christ;* the Messiah.

21. *Art thou Elias? Elias*, in the New Testament, is the same as *Elijah*, in the Old. In Malachi, 4: 5, it was predicted that God would send Elijah the prophet among the Jews, before the Messiah should actually appear. The design of this prophet's coming would be, according to the prediction, to produce a true reformation among the people, as preparatory to the Messiah's coming. By *Elijah the prophet*, Malachi meant a distinguished religious teacher, possessing the *spirit* of Elijah, and coming with *a design similar* to his, namely, to attempt a reformation among a degenerate and corrupt people. See Luke 1: 17. Matt. 11: 14. 17: 10—13. The Jews, however, had imbibed the opinion that the real Elijah, the identical prophet of the Old Testament, would reappear, and introduce the Messiah. One circumstance that tended to fix this opinion very deeply in their minds, if not to originate it among many, was the fact that, in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, which was in constant use, the passage in Malachi above referred to had been abused by inserting the word *Tishbite*, instead of the word *prophet*, — so that the passage, as expressed in the Greek version of the Hebrew Scriptures, was, *I will send Elijah the Tishbite*, &c. Under the influence of this prevalent opinion, the persons deputed asked John whether he was Elijah. Knowing what they meant by the question, John answered, No. He was not Elijah, in their meaning of the question. ‖ *That prophet.* It was also thought, among the Jews, that, besides Elijah, some other of the ancient prophets, and particularly Jeremiah, would appear at about the same time as the Messiah, in order to assist him. See Matt. 16: 14.

23. *He said, I am the voice*, &c. See Matt. 3. 3.

25. *Why baptizest thou, then*, &c. John was manifestly departing from the ordinary views of religion among the Jews, and was forming, by the rite of baptism, a religious community from among the people. Here was something new, and to the principal men of the nation inexplicable, if John was not the Messiah, nor one of those prophets, who, they had supposed, would come in company with, or just before, the Messiah. To the Messiah, they believed it would justly pertain to modify existing usages, to introduce new laws, and in various ways to assert his kingly authority. Hence their inquiry.

Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not:

27 He it is, who coming after me, is preferred before me, whose shoe's lachet I am not worthy to unloose.

28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God,

26. *John answered*, &c. The purport of John's reply was, That the work he was performing was comparatively an inferior work; that he was not acting for himself, but for the Messiah, who was already among the people, though unknown to them; and that the Messiah, whose dignity would be unspeakably greater, would soon manifest himself. ‖ *I baptize with water*. See on Matt. 3: 11. This remark implied, that One was at hand who should have a nobler office than that of baptizing *in water*; namely, that of *baptizing in the Holy Spirit*. ‖ *There standeth one*, &c. The word *standeth* is equivalent to the word *is*, or to the phrase *there has already arisen*.

27. *Is preferred before me;* is greatly superior to me. ‖ *Shoe's latchet;* the thong, or strap, by which a shoe, or sandal, was fastened on the foot. To loose, and to bind on, sandals, was the business of the lowest servants. The idea of John, then, was, So great is the dignity of the Messiah that I am not worthy to be his lowest servant. Compare Matt. 3: 11. See also Mark 1: 7.

28. *Bethabara beyond Jordan*. The country *east* of the Jordan was designated as *beyond* the river. The precise situation of the town is not known.

29. *The Lamb of God;* the Lamb which God has appointed. ‖ *Which taketh away the sin of the world*. The word *sin* is here used collectively, the singular for the plural. In the offering of a sacrifice for transgression under the Mosaic ritual, there was a confession of the crime, and a placing of hands on the head of the victim, which represented the removal, so to speak, of the offender's sins to this victim, and the substituting of him in the place of the offender. See Lev. 4: 4, 15. 16: 21. Thus the victim *took on himself*, and thus *took away from the offender*, the transgression, and was the means of pardon being granted to the offender. So Jesus Christ was spoken of by John the Baptist as the appointed instrument for *taking on himself* and thus *taking away from men* their sins; that is, he was the appointed instrument by whose interposition and death forgiveness of sins would be bestowed on men.

Jesus was called the Lamb of God in reference to the lamb which was slain in Egypt on the night when the Egyptians were visited with death, and the Israelites, in consequence of the blood being sprinkled on their door-posts, were saved from destruction. See Ex. 12th chapter. This lamb, being slain, and its blood being sprinkled on the door-posts, was then a means and a token of deliverance to the Israelites from destruction. So by the shedding of Christ's blood deliverance from eternal death comes to men Christ, then, is here regarded as *the Saviour* through whose *death* men can be saved.

Reference was also made to the daily morning and evening sacrifice of a lamb (see Ex. 29: 38—46. Num. 28: 3, 4), which perpetually reminded the people of their deliverance from Egypt, and which was an appointed means of their enjoying the favor of God. Thus there was continually kept before the minds of the Jews the idea of sacrifice in connection with the divine favor. The language which John used was adapted to prepare the minds of his hearers for the

which taketh away the sin of the world!

30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me; for he was before me.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

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fuller exhibition of Jesus as a Saviour, in consequence of his dying for men. Compare 1 Pet. 1:19. 2:24. Rev. 1:5. 5:9.

Jesus Christ, as the divinely-appointed victim, was to take away the sins of *the world;* that is, not of the Jewish nation only, but of the human race. He was to be a Saviour, not solely for Jews, but for the whole world. See on v. 9. The views of John the Baptist respecting the Messiah were of a very spiritual and elevated character, both as to the nature of the Messiah's office, and as to the extent of his design. The views which he here briefly expressed, well entitle him to the commendation bestowed by our Lord, as mentioned in Matt. 11:11.

30. Compare v. 15.

31. *And I knew him not.* John here spoke of the time preceding the baptism of Jesus, when he was not able to point out the particular person who should afterwards be known as the Messiah. He here referred to Jesus in *the character of Messiah.* They probably knew one another as relatives and friends, for the mother of Jesus was a relative of John's mother. See Luke 1:36. But no communication had been made to John respecting the ultimate destination of Jesus; and, though he might have been personally acquainted with him, and have had a high regard for him, yet he had not been authorized to point him out as the Messiah. ‖ *But that he should be made manifest to Israel;* that he should be announced, be introduced to the knowledge of the Jews. ‖ *Baptizing with water.* The administering of baptism was a prominent and distinguishing part of John's office, and it seems to be here taken as a part for the whole. The whole office of John—namely, teaching, announcing the Messiah, and baptizing the people—was intended for introducing the Messiah to the Jews, and preparing them to receive him. It was also to be the fact that a special announcement of Jesus as the Messiah would be made at the time of John's baptizing him. John knew that such was the design of his office, though he was not yet able to say what particular person was the Messiah.

32. Compare Matt. 3:16, 17. *Record;* testimony.

33. *And I knew him not;* that is, *as* the Messiah, and previously to the divinely-appointed signal. ‖ *Remaining on him.* The bodily form, which was to descend and alight on, or over, Jesus, was not to disappear immediately, but was to remain sufficiently long to prevent all suspicion of illusion, and to produce entire certainty that the person was indeed the Messiah, so that John could not mistake in regard to the person whom he was to announce and commend to the confidence of the people. ‖ *Baptizeth with the Holy Ghost;* will most copiously impart spiritual influences (see Matt. 3:11) as the Head of the new dispensation, and as distinct from John, who had been commissioned to baptize the people *in water.* Thus

34 And I saw and bare record, that this is the Son of God.

35 Again the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples;

36 And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!

37 And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.

38 Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, being interpreted, Master,) where dwellest thou?

39 He saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour.

40 One of the two which heard John *speak*, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

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by divine communication, John was taught the spiritual nature of the Messiah's dispensation, and was fully prepared to announce the proper person as the Messiah.

34. *The Son of God;* the true Messiah. See Matt. 3: 17.

There may appear to some to be a disagreement between the declarations of John the Baptist in vs. 31, 33, and the account of the Saviour's baptism given by Matthew, 3: 14, 15. For John seems, according to Matthew's account, to have known Jesus when he presented himself for baptism, and to have shrunk from administering the rite to so distinguished an individual. In reference to this difficulty, it should be remembered that the part which John was to perform in announcing the Messiah was one of unspeakable responsibility. The utmost assurance ought to exist in his own mind before he could venture to point out any individual as the long-expected Deliverer. Consequently, a particular sign was to appear by the special providence of God, and to be accompanied with such circumstances that a mistake could not be made; and, until that sign should appear, he was not to feel authorized to announce any one as the Messiah, however great a regard he might have for him, and however strong a belief he might have concerning him. Now, when Jesus actually came and requested baptism, John recollected his repute for early wisdom and piety (see Luke 2: 40, 52), and the whole appearance and manner of Jesus might have indicated him to be a person immensely superior to any who had yet resorted to John. The suspicion at once arose in his mind, that this person — unknown, indeed, to the multitude, and having lived in obscurity — was the distinguished One whom he had come to announce. Under the influence of the emotion which this suspicion occasioned, he sought to be excused from the duty of baptizing him. Jesus kindly waived the topic which John had touched on, and was baptized. *Then* appeared *the sign*, and confirmed the suspicions of John, so that he was able, without faltering, to declare to the multitude, This is the Son of God. But he did not *know*, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that this was the Messiah, till the appointed sign had appeared.

37. *They followed Jesus.* The office of John was, to introduce the Messiah, and prepare the people to receive him. It was then in accordance with his office and with his own views, that those who had been benefited by his instructions, should become followers of Jesus. He had no personal ambition to consult. See 3: 30.

38. *Master;* more strictly, *Teacher*.

39. *Tenth hour;* four o'clock in the afternoon. See on Matt. 20: 3.

41 He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias; which is, being interpreted, the Christ.

42 And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas; which is, by interpretation, A stone.

43 The day following Jesus would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip, and saith unto him, Follow me.

44 Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.

45 Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.

46 And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.

47 Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!

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41. *Which is, being interpreted, the Christ.* These words are not a part of Andrew's address to Simon. They are the words of the evangelist, informing his readers that the term *Messiah*, which Andrew had used, was of the same import as the term *Christ*. This latter term had, when the evangelist wrote, and among the people with whom he dwelt, come to be the usual name of the Saviour. The clause conveys the idea, that *Messiah* is of the same signification as *Christ*.

42. *Simon the son of Jona.* See 21: 15. Matt. 16: 17. ‖ *Cephas.* This word, in the dialect that Jesus spoke, signified *a rock*, or *stone*. It was now affixed by Jesus to the name *Simon*, as expressive of certain qualities in Simon's character, particularly his boldness and decision. ‖ *Which is, by interpretation, A stone.* The word here rendered *A stone*, is in reality the proper name *Peter;* and it should have been rendered as a proper name. The remark is thrown in by the evangelist, as apprizing his readers that the Simon, to whom the name *Cephas* was affixed, was the same as the apostle whom they knew by the name *Peter;* that is, that *Cephas*, when used as a proper name, and *Peter*, were the same name in the two languages; namely, the one which Jesus spoke, and the Greek, to which John's readers were accustomed. He was merely desirous that his readers should experience no perplexity about the names which he had occasion to mention.

43. *Would go;* was intending to go. ‖ *Follow me.* See on Matt. 4: 18—22.

44. *Bethsaida;* a town in Galilee on the west of the sea of Galilee.

45. *Nathanael.* See 21: 2. It is generally supposed that Nathanael was the same person as Bartholomew. See on Matt. 10: 3. ‖ *In the law;* the five books of Moses, as distinguished from the other books of the Old Testament. Moses and other writers in the Old Testament had foretold respecting the Messiah. Compare Luke 24: 27, 44. ‖ *The son of Joseph.* See Luke 3: 23.

46. *Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?* The inhabitants of Nazareth were very lightly esteemed by the Jews. See on Matt. 2: 23. Compare also the treatment which Jesus received in Nazareth, as related by Luke, 4: 29.

47. *An Israelite indeed;* not only by birth, but also in character; such a man as an Israelite, possessing a revelation from heaven, ought to be; a truly pious man.

48 Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.

49 Nathanael answered and saith unto him, Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.

50 Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig-tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

51 And he saith unto him. Verily, verily, I say unto you. Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.

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48. *Under the fig-tree.* Fig-trees abounded in Palestine; and it was customary for persons to spend leisure-time in their shade. Nathanael was doubtless employed in some pious manner while under the fig-tree.

49. *Rabbi.* A term of respectful address. See v. 38. ‖ *The Son of God—the King of Israel.* Both phrases were epithets of the Messiah. Nathanael was so struck with the evidence that Jesus possessed knowledge superior to man's, that he at once assented to Philip's opinion (see v. 45), and declared his conviction that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

50. *Greater things than these;* more striking evidences than what thou hast now seen, of my being the Messiah, the Son of God.

51. *Verily, verily;* truly, truly. The repetition of the word was intended to denote the utmost certainty. This repetition is peculiar to John's writings. ‖ *Hereafter ye shall see heaven open,* &c. Jesus had just said, that there would be hereafter more striking manifestations of his being the true Messiah, and the special object of God's favor. He then asserted, in a figurative manner, that Nathanael and those with whom he was associated should, by and by, see most decided proofs of divine regard towards him, marking him out as the favorite of Heaven, showing that in heaven there was a deep interest in him and in his cause, and that there was a constant and intimate connection between God and him. This was expressed in language drawn from the account of Jacob's dream, as related in Gen. 28: 11, 12. Jacob was on a journey. At night he dreamed that he saw a ladder set up on the earth and reaching to heaven. Angels of God were ascending and descending on it. The dream was designed, as appears by the connection, to convey to Jacob an assurance that God would protect him, and make him a very signal object of divine regard. So, the Saviour here said, the angels of God, the ministers of his will, shall be employed in my behalf; they shall come from heaven out of regard to me. That is, God will give you most satisfactory evidences that I am a special object of his favor, the Messiah whom he has sent. As Jacob enjoyed signal evidences of the divine regard, so you will see signal evidences of God's being interested in me. The Saviour referred to the signal miracles which would be wrought in attestation of his claims. ‖ *Upon the Son of man;* more properly, *in respect to* the Son of man. *The Son of man* is a title which the Saviour very often applied to himself, as signifying *the Messiah.* While others, when speaking of him, used a more dignified and solemn title, he employed the humble phrase, *Son of man.* See Matt. 8: 20. In Acts 7: 56, it is applied, by the martyr Stephen, to Jesus, after his ascension to heaven. But while the Saviour was on earth, it would seem that others did not use this term when speaking of him.

CHAPTER II.

AND the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there.

2 And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.

3 And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.

4 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.

5 His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do *it*.

6 And there were set there six water-pots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.

7 Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water-pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.

8 And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare *it*.

CHAPTER II.

1. *The third day;* that is, from the conversation with Nathanael, mentioned in the preceding chapter. ‖ *In Cana;* a town situated a short distance north-east from Nazareth.

2. *Called;* invited. ‖ *His disciples.* See 1 : 40, &c.

3. *When they wanted wine;* when the wine failed.

4. *Woman.* Our habits and manners are such, that to address one's mother by this term, would be disrespectful; but it was not so accounted among the Jews. This is sufficiently proved by the fact that the Saviour employed the same term when, on the cross, he most affectionately spoke to his mother. Compare also 4 : 21. 20 : 15. ‖ *What have I to do with thee?* See on Matt. 8 : 29. Jesus meant to relieve his mother's anxiety, as well as, perhaps, mildly to suggest that she needed not, and ought not, to interfere with him. Her mind was much occupied about the arrangements for the wedding entertainment, the care of which appears, in part at least, to have rested on her. It is probable that one of the parties concerned in this wedding was a relative of hers, and that she attended for the sake of giving assistance. Hence she knew respecting the wine, and was desirous that the deficiency might be seasonably supplied. To her son she looked, placing confidence in his power and kindness. He was probably engaged in religious conversation, which ought not to have been interrupted; and probably as yet no one of the guests had discovered the lack of wine, and there was no need of immediate attention to that matter. ‖ *Mine hour is not yet come;* the *precise time* for me to exert my power has not yet arrived. So long as the wine was not *quite* exhausted, it was best to defer his miraculous interposition, so that, when it was afforded, it might be properly acknowledged.

5. *His mother saith to the servants,* &c. This circumstance shows that the reply of Jesus to his mother was neither a harsh one, nor a denial of the request which was couched in her remark. She felt encouraged that he would grant her request.

6. *Water-pots of stone;* stone vessels for holding water. ‖ *The purifying of the Jews.* The Jews, on account of the regulations respecting ceremonial cleanness and uncleanness, had occasion for a constant supply of water, in readiness for washing. See on Mark 7 : 1—4. ‖ *Firkins.* The word thus translated signifies a measure containing somewhat more than eight gallons.

8. *Bear;* carry. ‖ *The governor of the feast;* the person who had the

9 When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, (but the servants which drew the water knew,) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,

10 And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: *but* thou hast kept the good wine until now.

11 This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.

12 After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren, and his disciples; and they continued there not many days.

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general superintendence of the entertainment, and who arranged the guests. It was not the master of the family, but a person who was appointed to take the management on such an occasion.

9. *Ruler of the feast;* the same as is called *governor* in the preceding verse.

10. *At the beginning;* that is, of an entertainment. ‖ *When men have well drunk, &c.* This remark was a *general* one in respect to what usually took place at great entertainments; namely, that when the guests had used a considerable quantity of wine, and had begun to be affected by it, then wine of an inferior quality was brought on, inasmuch as the guests would not then so easily distinguish between good wine and poor wine. There is not the slightest intimation that the guests at *this* entertainment had gone at all beyond the acknowledged bounds of propriety.

11. *Manifested forth his glory;* those *glorious qualities* which proved him to be the Messiah. On this occasion, his power and kindness were signally displayed; and the display which he had made of these qualities would excite anticipations of other methods by which he would prove himself the *glorious being* that had been expected. ‖ *Believed on him;* that is, more firmly. The confidence which they had reposed in him (see 1 : 40—51) was strengthened by this miracle.

The quantity of wine miraculously furnished by our Lord at this entertainment, may seem needlessly large. There were six vessels, each containing at least as much as sixteen gallons. But it must be considered, that wedding-festivals were prolonged sometimes through a whole week. See Judges 14 : 12. Besides, Jesus and his disciples were, perhaps, invited after the arrangements had been made, as they had but recently come into Cana. Our Lord's presence at the entertainment might also have been an occasion for still further enlarging the number of guests, and perhaps for some persons remaining longer than they had intended, or had been expected, to remain. Hence the wine which had been procured proved insufficient; and an opportunity occurred for Jesus to show forth both his power and his benevolence. Though, according to the custom of the times, a considerable quantity of wine was needed for the remaining part of the celebration, yet we can easily believe that all which our Lord miraculously furnished was not actually used on that occasion. The quantity left after the celebration, would be a very acceptable present to the newly-married couple, and would serve to illustrate the kindness of Jesus. At the same time, the presence of Jesus, to say nothing of the presence of such men as his disciples, would be a sufficient security against excess during the entertainment.

12. *His brethren.* See on Matt. 1 : 25

13 And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,

14 And found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money, sitting:

15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence: make not my Father's house a house of merchandise.

17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thy house hath eaten me up.

18 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?

13. *Passover.* See Matt. 26: 2.

14. *Found in the temple,* &c. See on Matt. 21: 12.

15. *A scourge of small cords.* Cords, or ropes, could easily be found in the place where sheep and oxen were exposed for sale. No intimation is given that the Saviour used any external violence in inducing the traders to depart. He made the scourge so as to show his earnestness and determination in rescuing the temple from such profanation. Violence, probably, was not needed. The traffickers were doubtless conscious that they were profaning the Lord's house, and acquiring unlawful gain by various forms of extortion, under pretence of accommodating the people in respect to the services of the temple. The mild dignity of Jesus, and the fervor of his zeal, so suitable to the times, would have disarmed them, even if any had wished to make resistance; and the by-standers, who had become acquainted with the claims of Jesus, might have manifested so cordial an approbation of his proceedings as at once to convince them that compliance with the demand of Jesus was the most expedient course for them.

The account here given by John agrees, in several circumstances, with the account of a similar transaction given by Matthew, 21: 12, 13; and it has been questioned whether the two accounts do not relate to the same transaction, John having related it at an early period by way of anticipation. But there are also circumstances in the two accounts which seem to indicate two separate transactions; and the accurate notices of time furnished by John in this part of his Gospel (see vs. 1, 12) do not agree with the supposition that he placed at the beginning of Jesus's public ministry an event which occurred near the end of it. It has also been suggested as worthy of distinct notice, that, both at the commencement and at the close of his public ministry, Jesus in a very special manner showed his abhorrence of the prevailing desecration of the temple, and his zeal for the holy house.

17. *That it was written.* See Ps. 69: 9. The saying there recorded was strikingly applicable to Jesus on this occasion. ‖ *The zeal of thy house;* zeal for thy house, for its purity and honor. ‖ *Hath eaten me up;* hath preyed upon my spirit. In other words, Intense anxiety for the honor of thy house has taken possession of me; so that I am willing to undergo any labors, and expose myself to any reproach, if I may recover thy house from pollution. The fervid zeal which Jesus felt for the honor of his Father, when he witnessed the abuses committed in the temple, was, as it were, a fire in his bones; and impelled by this holy zeal, he sought to rescue the temple from such an unauthorized and unsuitable use.

18. *What sign showest thou unto us,*

19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

20 Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?

21 But he spake of the temple of his body.

22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them: and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

&c.; what miraculous token dost thou exhibit? The same spirit here displayed itself, which prompted the demand in Matt. 12: 38. The act which Jesus had performed was one of very serious import, and contained in it a profession of great authority on his part. The abuses which had excited his indignation, had been of long standing, and had been quietly permitted by the chief men of the nation. But Jesus showed a decided disapprobation of them, and, as one clothed with authority from God, vindicated the divine honor. In support of his claim to such authority, some demanded a miraculous token.

19. *Jesus answered*, &c. In replying to their question, Jesus availed himself of certain figurative language to which they were accustomed, and by which the human body, or a human person, was spoken of as *a house* or *temple*. Compare 1 Cor. 3: 16. 6: 19. 2 Cor. 5: 1. He probably used this manner of speaking in order to excite the attention of the people. It might have been suggested by the fact that he was then standing in the temple. Using, perhaps, some significant gesture, such as pointing to his own person, or employing a significant tone of voice, he told them, *Destroy this temple*, &c. ‖ *In three days I will raise it up*. Jesus referred to his resurrection from the dead, as an event which would furnish very special evidence of his being THE ONE to whom, as the Messiah, such authority pertained as they had just witnessed. The Saviour referred to this same proof on the occasion related in Matt. 12: 38—40. Compare, too, Rom. 1: 4.

20. *Then said the Jews*, &c. The remark of Jesus was not apprehended by all who were present. As the conversation occurred in the temple, some appear to have understood him as speaking of the literal temple. Some of his hearers probably perceived that he did not mean to be understood as speaking of the real temple; but in a mixed company, some might have misapprehended him. Besides, the Jews were in the habit of cavilling with the Saviour; and some would be very willing, in a perverse way, and for the sake of prejudicing the minds of the common people, to misrepresent his language. ‖ *Forty and six years*, &c. The temple which was built after the return of the people from the Babylonian captivity (see Ezra 3: 8—13. 6: 14, 15), had received numerous repairs and additions at various times. Particularly did Herod the Great distinguish himself by renewing and decorating it; so that he was said to have rebuilt the temple. After his death this work went on with several intervals, so that a long time was occupied in laboring on the temple. It is to the time thus occupied that the Jews referred in this verse. Herod is said to have commenced repairing and adorning the temple in the eighteenth year of his reign, which is believed to have been sixteen years before the birth of Christ; and Jesus was now somewhat more than thirty years old. These two numbers, sixteen and thirty, make the amount of forty-six.

22. *They believed the scripture*. See Ps. 16: 10, 11, compared with Acts 2: 22—36. Previously to the resurrection of Jesus, his disciples greatly misapprehended the testimony of the Scriptures concerning the Messiah;

23 Now, when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast-*day*, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.

24 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all *men*,

25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.

CHAPTER III.

THERE was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

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and though he repeatedly told them of his expected death and resurrection, they did not understand him. See Mark 9: 30—32. Luke 9: 43—45. But after his resurrection, they perceived what he meant, and their confidence in the Scriptures was confirmed. The declarations of Jesus, and the facts concerning him, agreed with the writings of the Old Testament; hence, the disciples trusted with a firmer confidence both in the Scriptures and in their Master's declarations.

23. *In the feast-day*. The word *day* was added by the translators, as is signified by its being printed in Italics. It is not needed; for the passover was a festival, not of one day's duration merely, but of a week's duration. See on Matt. 26: 2. The expression *during the festival* better conveys the idea of the evangelist. ‖ *In his name;* in him. See 1: 12.

24. *Commit himself unto them;* trust himself to them, put himself in their power. As an illustration of his not trusting himself to the people who were filled with admiration at his miracles, see 6: 15. The reason of his not putting himself in the power of the people is stated by this evangelist to have been, his intimate knowledge of the human character. John had a most exalted opinion of his Lord. In looking back on the conduct of Jesus, he was struck with admiration at the wisdom which that conduct displayed, and he recognized in it a knowledge of man which elevated Jesus immensely above all human beings that had ever claimed the respect and obedience of men. The statement of John in vs. 24, 25, is best accounted for by referring to Rev. 2: 23. Jesus knew fully the plan which he came to accomplish, both in its ultimate result, and in all its details. He knew how grossly misapprehended by the people was this plan, and yet how determined and ardent the people might become in endeavoring to effect *their own* views of what the Messiah should attempt. The utmost circumspection on his part was needed. Caution was extremely requisite in meeting the ignorance and ill-will even of the principal men, as well as the headlong rashness by which the multitude were ready to distinguish themselves in carrying into effect their views of a temporal Messiah, who should rescue the nation from the Roman yoke, and exalt them to the summit of power.

SUGGESTION. But let us not fail to APPLY TO OURSELVES the closing thoughts of this chapter. Jesus knows what is in man. How suitable, then, to be our Saviour! He knows our ignorance, and all our liability to error and sin. At the same time, he looks on us with the most tender compassion, and is accomplishing for his followers a plan, the results of which, however feeble and however erroneous may be our views of it, will far exceed what eye hath seen or heart conceived. To his wisdom, love, and power, let us heartily and entirely yield up ourselves.

CHAPTER III.

1. *A ruler of the Jews;* a principal man among the Jews, a member, also, of the Sanhedrim. Compare 7: 45, 50.

2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

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2. *By night.* The circumstance of his coming *by night* is sometimes ascribed to a desire for concealment, and to an unwillingness to be known as having conferred with Jesus. Other reasons, also, can be supposed for his selecting the night. Perhaps he desired a long and uninterrupted conversation with Jesus, and his own employments might not have allowed him time during the day. He might also have observed that Jesus was much occupied every day among the people. Thus the night might have been, for the best reasons, the most favorable time. On two other occasions, Nicodemus publicly showed himself well-disposed towards Jesus. See 7: 50—52. 19: 39. ‖ *Rabbi;* the usual term of respectful address among the Jews, in our Lord's time, to those who had gone through a course of literary and religious training, and who were therefore considered as learned, and able to teach, in religious matters. It was also applied, as in the present instance, by courtesy, to any one who actually proved himself capable of being a teacher. See 1: 38.

3. *Verily, verily.* See on 1: 51. ‖ *A man;* literally, *any one,* whether Jew or Gentile. ‖ *Born again.* This expression was figuratively employed in reference to any great changes that had taken place in a person's character or condition. It was equivalent to the expression *become a new man.* Thus, when a Gentile became a proselyte to the Jewish religion, it was customary to speak of him as *having been born anew,* that is, having become a new man, and entered into a new state of things ‖ *See.* This word has sometimes the meaning *to enjoy.* Compare 1 Pet. 3: 10. ‖ *The kingdom of God;* the divine reign, the privileges and blessings of the Messiah's dispensation. See Matt. 3: 2. The assertion, then, of the Saviour was, that no man, whether Jew or Gentile, can enjoy the blessings of the Messiah's administration without having experienced a thorough change in character and state. The Messiah's administration is here regarded in all its extent, commenced and carried forward on earth, completed in heaven.

This remark of our Lord's appears to be abrupt, and not to be properly an answer to what Nicodemus had said; but it is probable that only the *chief* topics of the conversation are preserved by the evangelist, and that we are here furnished with a specimen of the manner in which Jesus unfolded the great truths of his religion to a serious inquirer. John the Baptist had already attracted much attention as the professed forerunner of the Messiah. Another person had now arisen, and was exciting very general regard by claiming actually to be the Messiah, and by extensively inculcating his own views as a teacher. Nicodemus wished to make inquiries, particularly as things were proceeding in a manner so different from the ordinary expectations of the Jews. To Jesus, then, as being the new leader, he repaired, in order to ascertain what were his views respecting the Messiah's dispensation, and what was his object. He appears to have gone in a serious and candid frame of mind, as though he was in some perplexity, unable to account for the new proceedings, and yet desirous, if he was in error, to be instructed. To questions which he would, in this state of mind, propose, the remark of Jesus in the third verse might be a very natural reply.

4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

5 Jesus answered, Verily,

4. *How can a man*, &c. A new and surprising thought had been presented to Nicodemus. He had not been in the habit of thinking that *every one*, in order to enjoy the blessings of the Messiah's reign, must become a new man. He had regarded this reign as having special reference to the Jewish nation, as intended to rescue the Jews from their civil degradation, to exalt them to the summit of power, to reform the abuses which had crept into their religious state, and to spread their religion over the world, and in this way to confer blessings on those who were not native Jews. The effect of the Messiah's reign would be, as he supposed, to purify and extend the Jewish religion, and make other nations Jews. However plain, then, it might be to his mind that a *Gentile* must undergo some great change in order to enjoy the blessings of the Messiah's reign, it was utterly surprising to him that *Jews* as well as Gentiles, that every one, in short, must be born anew in order to enjoy those blessings. So utterly distant was this thought from his usual way of viewing the subject, that he might have considered himself as not understanding Jesus; and, in his surprise, he asked a question which was fitted to draw forth an explanation of *the kind of new birth* which Jesus affirmed to be necessary.

5. *Jesus answered.* Jesus at once explained, that he meant no such birth as would have reference to men's earthly condition, or to their mode of existence in this world. He referred to a spiritual change, a change in the soul, — a change to be effected not by man, but by the Spirit of God, and adapted throughout to the true nature of the Messiah's reign. This reign was to be the reign of God in a man's heart, so that he would be a subject, in heart, of the Messiah, prepared to enjoy the spiritual blessings of the Messiah's administration, both in time and in eternity. If God is reigning in a man's heart, that man is truly pious, is actuated by the principles which constitute the character of heaven; and he is therefore entitled to the spiritual and heavenly blessings which the Messiah bestows. ‖ *Born of water.* This expression has been regarded by numerous writers, both ancient and modern, as referring to baptism. In very early times, the opinion was defended, from this view of the passage, that baptism is essential to salvation; and this erroneous opinion had much to do with the establishing of infant baptism. Some have also supposed that our Lord meant to represent baptism as a sign and seal of regeneration, or as an outward token and confirmation of inward grace. The opinion has also been extensively entertained that our Lord was speaking of his visible, as well as of his invisible kingdom; and that, in respect to its outward form, its visible constitution, he here taught that no one could be an *acknowledged* subject of his government, or, in other words, a member of the visible church, without being baptized; and that in the subsequent expression — *born of the Spirit* — he also explicitly declared that a spiritual, inward change is necessary in order for a man to belong to the invisible kingdom of God; that is, to be a true subject of that kingdom, and to become prepared for the bliss of heaven. Our Lord has thus been understood as showing what is necessary in order *to become*, and *to be outwardly acknowledged*, a subject of the Messiah; and as thus showing the *entire* requisition made of men, and the *completeness* both as to character and to outward condition, which properly pertains to a subject of the heavenly reign. In sustaining this view, reference is had to the Gospel of Mark, 16 : 16, He that *believeth* and *is baptized* shall be

verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water, and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

saved; and to the Epistle to the Romans, 10: 9, 10, If thou shalt *confess with thy mouth* the Lord Jesus, and shalt *believe in thine heart*, that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with *the heart* man believeth unto righteousness; and with *the mouth* confession is made unto salvation. In these passages, both the outward profession of faith and the inward possession are insisted on. And it is doubtless true, that outward profession, and therefore baptism, by means of which the profession was made in primitive times, may in some circumstances be a satisfactory test of love to Christ; and therefore, if, in those circumstances, a person be unwilling to be baptized and to profess subjection to the Lord Jesus, he gives decided indication that his heart is not thoroughly right in the sight of God. Such a view is not a positive declaration that baptism is essential to salvation; yet it gives to baptism and outward profession a prominence, which does not well agree with the fact that, throughout this conversation with Nicodemus, our Lord does not, in any other phrase, convey the most distant allusion to the necessity of taking a decided stand as an avowed subject of his reign. On other occasions, he distinctly showed the necessity of publicly avowing attachment to him, and of submitting to whatever self-denial might be the consequence. See Matt. 10: 32, 33. But *here*, his instructions are preëminently spiritual, exhibiting the *essential* traits of his dispensation.

This much-controverted phrase—*born of water*—admits of a simple and easy explanation, when brought into comparison with a similar phrase used by this evangelist in 1: 13, namely, *born of blood*. By this latter phrase, *natural birth* is meant. The existence of man in this world by natural birth, with all his sinful propensities, is here traced to the element mentioned, as an originating cause. Now, in the expression *born of water*, a different element is brought to view, as the originating cause of a new birth to a spiritual, holy existence. This element, *water*, was the usual emblem and means of purity. While, then, *to be born of blood* means *to be born a human being*, with all the corrupt propensities of human nature, *to be born of water* means to commence a holy existence, originated from a pure and holy source This view presents a suitable reply to the question of Nicodemus in the preceding verse. For *to be born from the womb* (v. 6), in the ordinary course of nature, is another mode of saying, *to be born of blood and of the will of the flesh* (1: 13). Now, in order to convey to Nicodemus a just view of this new birth, our Lord, in replying to the question whether a second *natural* birth, a being born *of blood and of the flesh*, was meant, declared, A man, in order to enter into the kingdom of God, must be born again, not of blood and of the flesh, but *of water and of the Spirit;* that is, he must experience, not a natural birth, but a spiritual one; a birth, originating not from an element of impurity, but from a pure source. *Water* appears to have been here mentioned by our Saviour as indicating a *pure* source of a new spiritual life in man. He immediately adds an expression of similar import, mentioning, in plain language, the author of this new birth. ‖ *And of the Spirit.* The whole phrase *born of water and of the Spirit* may signify a spiritual birth effected by a divine agent, just as the phrase *born of blood and of the flesh* signifies natural birth effected by a human agent. The change in the heart towards God is effected by the Holy Spirit. Being *born of the Spirit* is the same as is called, in 1: 13, being *born of God*. It is a becoming possessed of a new spiritual life by

6 That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.

7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

8 The wind bloweth where

the influences of the Holy Spirit on the soul; a change of *the inner man*, or the soul, in regard to spiritual matters, so that the person becomes a child of God, similar to him in disposition and holy principles. || *Enter into the kingdom of God;* be admitted among the subjects of this reign, so as to enjoy its blessings.

6. Jesus next proceeded to show why, in order to enjoy the privileges of the divine reign, it was necessary to become a new man. The reign of the Messiah was to be a spiritual reign, establishing holiness in the hearts of men, and preparing them for the holy services and enjoyments of heaven. Hence, if men are, by their natural birth, *not holy*, it is necessary that by another, a spiritual birth, they should receive a principle of holy love to God. If their natural birth has not secured to them spiritual life, this spiritual life must be bestowed by some spiritual agent. They must be born of God, as well as of men. *That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.* The word *flesh* is used in Scripture with various senses. Our Lord here availed himself of the twofold signification of the word by which it is used to express *human nature* or *a human being*, and the *sinfulness* which human beings exhibit, and which is so congenial to them. The noun *flesh*, here repeated, is also used instead of the adjective *fleshly*, as being a more vivid manner of speaking. The meaning may be thus expressed: That which is born of mere human nature is destitute of holiness, is sinful. That is, Man, viewed solely as the offspring of his earthly parents, is a sinner. Hence he is not prepared for the spiritual services and blessings of the Messiah's reign. || *That which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.* The word *spirit* is also used in a variety of senses; and our Lord availed himself of a twofold signification of it. Being the contrast of *flesh*, it here signifies *the divine nature*, or *Him who possesses the divine nature — God.* It also expresses that *holiness* which is essential to the divine nature. The noun *spirit* is, in the second place of its being used, employed instead of the adjective *spiritual;* that is, *like God, holy.* The idea is, That which results from God's influence is holy. That is, Man is holy only in consequence of God's influence on his soul. Hence he can be fit for the services and privileges appropriate to the Messiah's reign only by the Holy Spirit's renewing his moral nature, making him new in respect to his disposition towards God. Man, by his natural birth, has not those moral qualities which are necessary to a subject of the Messiah both here and hereafter; in order to possess those qualities, he needs a spiritual birth, resulting from the influence of the Holy Spirit.

What a startling truth must this have been to Nicodemus; to any Jew, indeed, who had been relying on descent from Abraham, on circumcision, and other external ceremonies, as THE QUALIFICATION for a subject of the Messiah!

7. *Marvel not;* wonder not. Nicodemus had, in v. 4, expressed surprise at the Saviour's declaration, as bringing to view something which he could not comprehend, and which was quite unexpected. Jesus proceeded to show him, that however surprising the declaration, yet its truth ought not, on that account, to be doubted; for there are operations in divine providence which cannot be explained by man, but the reality of which is obvious to the senses; for instance, the blowing of the wind.

8. *Where it listeth;* where it pleases; that is, so far as man is concerned. The wind obeys not man's dictates, and we cannot fully explain its operation. Yet it blows; we hear its

it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be?

10 Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?

11 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness.

12 If I have told you earthly

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sound, we see its effects. Certainly, then, other things, things having respect to our souls, may occur above our ability to comprehend and explain; and the reality of an influence on the soul may be discerned by its effects on a man's character. An illustration from the blowing of the wind was a very natural one, as the same word, in the original language, means both *wind* and *spirit*. ‖ *So is every one that is born of the Spirit.* That is, He is really renewed in his soul by the Holy Spirit, and this renewal will be manifested by its effects, though you are unable to perceive the manner in which the new spiritual creation has been effected.

10. *A master of Israel;* properly, *a teacher of Israel.* Our Lord may be regarded as saying, Every *Jew*, from the information in his Scriptures, ought to know that men must be born of the Spirit in order to enjoy the blessings of the divine reign; and certainly a *teacher* of Jews ought to know this truth. There are frequent expressions in the Old Testament, and those relating to Jews, very similar to the great truth which Jesus was enforcing; and Nicodemus ought to have been acquainted with the sentiment contained in such language. See Ezek. 11:19, 20. 36:26, 27. Compare, too, Ps. 51:6, 10, 17. We can scarcely suppose that Nicodemus was ignorant of such passages. He had, however, failed rightly to understand them; and having been educated in the belief that the Jews, as such, were a holy people, the children of God, he never before, probably, had thought that a Jew, of external probity, might be destitute of true holiness. His religious views, like those of his countrymen, were gross. Such was the influence of the views to which he was accustomed, that he had not discerned the right bearing of such passages. He had read them, but had not perceived their import. His mind had been preoccupied with other views of religion; just as, at the present day, many a person who has habitually read the Scriptures, begins to see, when some new light has darted into his mind, that he has often read as though he read not; that he has entirely misapprehended the proper and the full force of some of the most familiar portions of the Scriptures. And are there not ministers and priests, nominally Christian, who, if a teacher from heaven should fasten in their minds the truth that they need to be born again, would be as much overtaken by surprise as was Nicodemus, and make almost as strange inquiries as he did?

11. *That we do know — that we have seen.* The word *that* is here equivalent to *what, that which.* The idea of the verse is, I declare to you what I see and know to be true.

12. *Earthly things.* Such things are those which belong to this earth, and are therefore subject to every one's observation. Hence the term is used in reference to things that are plain and easy to be understood. The Saviour had been insisting on the necessity of a spiritual change in men in order that they might become his followers, and participate in the blessings of his administration. The truth that such a

things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you *of* heavenly things?

13 And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven.

14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

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change is necessary, he here speaks of as a very obvious one — one that every man might be expected to admit as a first principle. ‖ *Heavenly things.* These are things pertaining to heaven, above the reach of men, and consequently attended with difficulty to persons on earth, and needing revelation and explanation. The term *heavenly* then means *elevated, difficult, beyond the ordinary range of men's thoughts.* The Saviour thus intimated to Nicodemus, that he was about to introduce sublimer topics, and that he had instructions of a more elevated and difficult character to communicate. But, if Nicodemus could not receive those obvious truths which he had just declared, the *heavenly* themes on which he wished to expatiate, would be entirely beyond his reach.

13. Respecting these more elevated topics, no one but Jesus himself, the Messiah, whose abode had been in heaven, and who was therefore intimately acquainted with God's designs, was adequate to give instruction. *No man hath ascended up to heaven.* By referring to Deut. 30 : 11—14, it will appear that subjects which were involved in difficulty were spoken of as being *afar off, in heaven, out of human sight;* so that before a person could give instruction respecting them, he must ascend to heaven and acquire information. Compare, also, Prov. 30 : 4. *To ascend up to heaven*, then, means, to possess superior knowledge, and to be able to give instruction on subjects encompassed with difficulty; to be able to teach respecting *heavenly*, sublime topics. ‖ *The Son of man.* See 1 : 51. ‖ *Which is in heaven.* The word here rendered *is* has also the signification of a past tense, and should here be translated *has been;* He who *has been in heaven*, but who *has now come down from heaven*, he it is, and he only, that is adequate to instruct on the more elevated topics yet to be developed in the Messiah's religion.

The Saviour then proceeded, as appears by the following verses, to unfold several of the great truths of his religion.

14. *As Moses lifted up;* raised on high. See Num. 21 : 6—9. ‖ *So must the Son of man be lifted up.* By referring to 8 : 28. 12 : 32, 34, it will be seen that this expression was afterwards used by our Lord with reference to his death, and that it was so understood by the people. To his death our Lord, doubtless, referred in speaking to Nicodemus. But the language was such, and the allusion to the brazen serpent such, that perhaps Nicodemus would draw from this remark only the sentiment that the Messiah would be *set forth* as a means of spiritual benefit, and as the object in which men should place their confidence. Still, even if the thought of being *lifted up* in a suffering and dying condition, as the Saviour of men, was not at once apprehended by Nicodemus, the terms employed were such as would inevitably give a new turn to the thoughts of Nicodemus, and would insensibly prepare him for the fuller disclosures which were afterwards to be made. Thus the thought of the Messiah's suffering and dying for the benefit of men was, at least obscurely, held up before Nicodemus.

15. There was a striking resemblance between the occasion for the elevating of the brazen serpent, the

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.

17 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.

18 He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.

19 And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither

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result of its being elevated, the disposition necessary on the part of the distressed Israelites to receive the benefit proposed, and the occasion for the Messiah's being crucified, the result of his being crucified, the disposition necessary in order to receive the benefit proposed. The world was regarded as being in a sinful and miserable condition; eternal life was to result from the Messiah's sufferings; believing in the Messiah was required in order to enjoy the blessings which he came to bestow. In addition to these thoughts, the Messiah's blessings were not to be restricted to one people; they were to be enjoyed by all, whether Jews or Gentiles, who should believe in him. Thus the Saviour led Nicodemus to the view of a spiritual salvation, to be enjoyed, not in consequence of any national distinctions, but in connection with trusting in him as the only appointed medium of eternal life.

16. *So loved;* so great was the compassion. ‖ *The world;* not merely the Jewish nation, but the human race. This thought it was necessary to present with great clearness before the mind of Nicodemus. For the Jews cherished the opinion that the Messiah would inflict miseries on all other nations, and that the only way in which other nations would be blessed, would be by their becoming Jews. ‖ *His only-begotten Son.* This phrase is used as expressing the unspeakable dignity of the Saviour (see on 1: 14) and the unspeakable affection of God for him. Such dignity and such affection show how unspeakable was the compassion of God for a guilty world.

What disclosures were now opening on the mind of Nicodemus! How different the design of God in sending the Messiah from what he had been in the habit of supposing! What a different reign from what he had been anticipating!

17. *To condemn the world.* The Jews supposed that great miseries would be inflicted on the Gentile world by the Messiah. On the contrary, the design of God in respect to the human race was of a most benevolent character, having regard to their *salvation.*

18. *He that believeth,* &c. Faith in the Messiah as the unspeakably glorious Son of God, is the great requisite for enjoying his blessings. It is not the fact of being a Jew, that secures salvation; but it is the fact of believing in the Messiah, and obeying him. Declining to receive the Messiah in an obedient spirit—*this* will expose to condemnation both Gentiles and Jews. Thus, inward piety was enforced as necessary; a spirit of love, trust, and obedience.

19. *The condemnation;* the cause of condemnation. ‖ *Light is come,* &c.; true knowledge of God, which has been imparted by the Messiah, as the Teacher and the Saviour. ‖ *They loved darkness,* &c. They loved their ignorance and sinfulness, rather than the true knowledge and holiness which the Messiah's religion proposes.

20. *Hateth the light.* The term *light*

cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.

21 But he that doeth truth, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

22 After these things, came Jesus and his disciples into the

is applied to any thing which brings out to view what was before concealed. The religion of the Messiah clearly and fully exposes the deformity of sin. And to this religion may be applied the general principle, that wicked men hate exposure, and will oppose whatever brings out to public view the evil of their conduct. ‖ *Should be reproved;* detected, exposed.

21. *He that doeth truth*, &c. The word *truth* is here the opposite of *evil* in the preceding verse, and signifies *true uprightness*, both towards God and towards men. A man who is conscious of uprightness does not dread examination; he rather seeks the opportunity of comparing his character and conduct with the test which a true knowledge of God's will furnishes. ‖ *That his deeds may be made manifest.* Such a man does not seek concealment and dread detection, like the man who practises evil. He rather desires that his actions may be viewed in the light of divine truth; not that he may boast of them, but that they may be compared with the true standard. For he has a consciousness of integrity, and wishes that all his actions may be perfectly right, and that he may know that they are right. ‖ *That they are wrought in God.* The preposition here translated *in*, has in this place the meaning, *in conformity to, in accordance with the will of.* Then we have the idea, *that they are done in conformity to God's will* and have his approbation. The religion of Jesus is a system of moral light and truth, furnishing a correct judgment of men's characters and actions. To this perfect standard of uprightness a truly good man will gladly come, that he may know whether his actions are right. But this perfect standard which condemns what is wrong, is disliked by those who are conscious of being in the wrong, and they prefer to keep aloof from an examination by this standard; therefore they come into condemnation; just as a sick man, who should love his disease, would not desire a remedy. His disease, however, much as he might love it, would still be preying on his constitution, and would lead to death. So a sinful disposition rejects the gospel, and incurs eternal death; and for this, it is not the gospel, but the man himself who slights the gospel, that is culpable.

Suggestions. 1. Have we experienced such a change in our dispositions towards God, that we are radically different from what we once were? Have we now towards God a spirit of filial love, reverence, and obedience? v. 3.

2. Verses 14—18 bring to view so clearly our *state of condemnation* on account of sin — the *method* which God has proposed for *our recovery* — the *ample provisions* of that method — the *requisites* for enjoying the blessings provided — the *unutterable bliss* of those who shall enjoy these blessings — and the *unutterable woe* of those who shall fail to obtain them,— that these verses ought to be indelibly imprinted on our memories, and pondered with the most devout attention. O! who of us will fail of eternal life, after reading these blessed words of the Lord Jesus! *Will* we neglect the great salvation?

3. If we dislike the religion of the Bible, the difficulty lies in our own hearts; we are under the influence of sin. v. 20. One great reason why any men are infidels is, the fact, that the religion of the Bible is so holy, and runs so entirely counter to their inclinations.

22. *Land of Judea.* The preceding conversation occurred in the city of

land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

23 And John also was baptizing in Ænon, near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

24 For John was not yet cast into prison.

25 Then there arose a question between *some* of John's disciples and the Jews, about purifying.

26 And they came unto John,

Jerusalem. Compare 2 : 23. Jesus now went into the country parts of Judea. ‖ *Baptized.* It may be well to observe, that this is the first distinct notice of Jesus's having baptized. He baptized, however, not personally, but by means of his disciples. See 4 : 2.

23. *John also was baptizing.* John's labors had reference to the Messiah, as introducing him to the people, and coöperating with him. Hence John could continue his work even after Jesus had begun to collect disciples, as he would prepare for the Messiah those whom he himself should baptize. There was entire harmony between John and Jesus; and the labors and the office of John blended with those of the Messiah, and were consummated in him and by him, just as the morning twilight blends with, and is finished by, the rising day. ‖ *Ænon, near to Salim.* The precise situation of these places is not known. It is generally supposed that they were central places in the country near the Jordan. ‖ *Much water.* There has been much unnecessary dispute in regard to the meaning of the original words here used; some writers contending that they ought to be translated *many streams* or *rivulets.* It has been supposed that the question, whether baptism, as administered in those early times, was the *immersion* of a person in water, would be affected by the proper translation of these words. But such a supposition is wholly needless; for the immersion of a person can be performed in a brook or rivulet, as well as in a lake or a larger collection of water. And the fact that mention is made of *much water*, or *many streams*, in connection with baptism, is a sufficiently clear intimation that more than a few drops of water were necessary for this ordinance. It has indeed been said, that John selected a part of the country where there were *many streams*, in order that the people and their animals might have an adequate supply of water for drinking and washing; but not a hint of this is given by the evangelist. On the contrary, both before and after these words, baptism is mentioned; and the thought almost necessarily arises in a reader's mind, that this place was selected with reference to its suitableness for baptizing. As to the proper meaning of the phrase translated *much water*, a careful examination of other passages in which it occurs, clearly shows that it conveys the idea of *abundant water*, or *an abundance of water*, not the idea of *many rivulets.* See Rev. 1 : 15. 14 : 2. 17 : 1. 19 : 6, in which passages our translation has the phrase *many waters*, the expression in the original being the same as in the original of the verse under consideration. In all these passages, the idea of *many rivulets* is wholly inappropriate. Again, in the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, the same phrase occurs in passages which will not admit any other idea than that of *much water;* and in that Greek translation the phrase rendered *many waters* and the phrase rendered *much water* are equivalent. ‖ *They came;* that is, the people came.

24. *Cast into prison.* See Matt. 14 : 3.

25. *About purifying.* In the next verse, it is related that the persons among whom arose the questioning, repaired to John in order to obtain his opinion. In stating the matter to him,

and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all *men* come to him.

27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.

28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.

29 He that hath the bride, is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly, because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

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they mentioned the circumstance that Jesus was *baptizing*. Hence it is probable that the word *purifying* had respect to baptism, which was a rite emblematic of moral purification. From the tenor of John's reply, it would seem that the question had respect to the fact that Jesus was attracting greater numbers of the people and greater regard than John. The persons concerned in the conversation needed instruction; they had not a just view of the relation which subsisted between John and Jesus. A suitable opportunity was now afforded for asserting the superiority of the Messiah, and for preparing John's disciples heartily to acknowledge Jesus as the great object of their faith.

26. *Rabbi.* See on v. 2. ‖ *Thou barest witness.* Compare 1: 28, &c. ‖ *All men come to him;* comparatively speaking. Some still went to John; but so much greater a number to Jesus, that it might be said John was forsaken. Formerly, the multitudes repaired to John. See Matt. 3: 5. Jesus was now attracting the principal regard.

27. *A man can receive nothing,* &c. No man can justly assume to himself any dignity, unless God appoints it for him. A man's station depends on the appointment of God. This general truth John proposed as entirely meeting the fact that Jesus was more highly honored, and more extensively regarded than himself. Such was the appointment of Heaven. If John had arrogated to himself higher powers and greater honor than he actually claimed, he would have assumed what had not been appointed for him. If Jesus had not possessed higher power and greater honor than John, he would have failed to receive what God had appointed for him. Thus the principle contained in the remark was applicable both to John and to Jesus.

28. *Ye yourselves bear me witness,* &c. John further accounted for the increasing honor of Christ, by recalling to the memory of those with whom he was conversing, that he himself had always professed not to be the Messiah, but to be merely his forerunner. It was to be expected then, since the great personage himself had appeared, that John must retire comparatively into the shade.

29. *He that hath the bride is the bridegroom,* &c. The relation which John sustained to the Messiah made it altogether proper that the principal attention should be paid to the Messiah. This he illustrated by an allusion to marriage-ceremonies. It is the bridegroom himself, not the mere friend, or attendant on the bridegroom, that is *the principal* person. And not only is the friend of the bridegroom necessarily an inferior person, so far as the marriage is concerned, but that friend rejoices in the happiness of the bridegroom, and holds himself ready to do all in his power to promote it. He would not envy the bridegroom; he would not detract from his dignity or his joy. So John, instead of looking with envious eyes on Jesus, would rejoice in his greater dignity, and in his attracting to himself greater regard from the

30 He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.

32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.

33 He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true.

34 For he whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him.*

35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.

36 He that believeth on the

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people. ‖ *Friend of the bridegroom.* See on Matt. 9: 15. ‖ *Bridegroom's voice;* his expressions of joy. ‖ *Is fulfilled;* is made complete. I seek for no higher joy, than to have been an assistant of the Messiah, and to see him becoming the great object of attraction.

30. *He must increase,* &c. Jesus, as the true Messiah, must be advanced to still increasing dignity; while I must sink into obscurity.

31. Another reason was given by John for cheerfully yielding the precedence to Jesus; namely, the Messiah came from heaven, and is therefore most fully qualified to be the Great Teacher; while John was merely of earthly origin, and could therefore teach only in an inferior manner. *He that cometh from above.* See v. 13. ‖ *He that is of the earth;* one of earthly origin. Such was John. ‖ *Speaketh of the earth;* that is, of matters comparatively plain, not requiring that a person, in order to give instruction, should have been in heaven, and have possessed a most intimate acquaintance with the designs of God. Compare v. 13.

32. *What he hath seen,* &c. Compare v. 11. ‖ *No man receiveth his testimony;* that is, comparatively speaking, taking into view the whole nation. In this remark of John, there might also have been an allusion to what had been said in v. 26—"*All men come to him.*" While some were ready to complain that so many repaired to Jesus, John thought there was occasion to lament that only *so few* received his instructions.

33. *Hath set to his seal;* hath expressed his confirmed belief. By the use of a seal, important documents are confirmed. *To seal* a document is *to confirm* it, and to declare a conviction of its genuineness. ‖ *That God is true;* that God is worthy of confidence, as a God of truth. He who becomes a sincere disciple of Jesus, expresses thereby his strong belief in God as a God of truth.

34. *For,* &c. Because the Messiah gives truly divine instruction. ‖ *The words of God;* the instructions which he has received from God. Compare 5: 19, 20. 8: 28. ‖ *By measure;* to a limited extent. The prophets were considered as enjoying divine influence in various degrees; to them it was dealt out, so to speak, by measure. Not so with the Messiah. In a perfectly full manner, without any limitation, was he qualified to make known the will of God. His instructions then are, peculiarly, the instructions of God; and whoever receives him expresses thereby his confidence in God.

35. *Given all things into his hand;* hath invested him with all authority and power as Lord of the new dispensation. See Matt. 11: 27. Eph. 1: 22.

36. Compare v. 18. *See life;* enjoy everlasting life, the bliss of heaven.

Remarks. 1. A correct view of God as the sovereign disposer, tends to make us contented with our lot. v. 27.

2. We best consult for our real

Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

3 He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.

4 And he must needs go through Samaria.

5 Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.

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usefulness and our real dignity, by not arrogating to ourselves what does not pertain to us, but by cheerfully and faithfully performing what is manifestly our appropriate duty. vs. 28—30.

3. Humility is essential to real worth of character. v. 30. Compare Matt. 11 : 11.

4. The truths of the gospel possess divine authority. vs. 31—35.

5. Dreadful are the consequences of slighting the truths of the gospel—glorious the consequences of receiving and obeying them. v. 36.

CHAPTER IV.

2. *But his disciples.* That is, his disciples baptized by his authority.

3. *He left Judea.* The Pharisees had begun to show their ill-will. Jesus therefore retired from Judea to a part of the land where their influence was not so great, and where the prospect of promoting his cause was more encouraging. It would have been of no advantage for Jesus to come into collision unnecessarily with the Pharisees; and the time had not yet arrived for his delivering himself up to his adversaries. The success of John the Baptist, so much adapted to weaken the authority of the Pharisees, was sufficiently unpleasant to them; and now that Jesus, who more clearly and decidedly exposed their erroneous views and practices, was attracting still more attention than John, they would attempt, in a variety of ways, to counteract his teaching, if not to seek his death.

4. *Go through Samaria.* Jesus was in Judea, and was proposing to go to Galilee. The map shows that Samaria lay between those two divisions, and of course the direct road from Judea to Galilee would conduct a person through Samaria.

5. *Sychar.* This was the same as the city Shechem (Gen. 33 : 18. Josh. 20 : 7), called, in Acts 7 : 16, *Sychem.* It is supposed that the Jews, through dislike to the city, as being a distinguished place for the Samaritan worship, altered the name in their common conversation. The name *Sychar*, as altered from *Sychem*, may be traced to a Hebrew word sounded *Sheker*, which means *falsehood*, and was used in reference to idols. It may also be traced to a Hebrew word sounded *Shikkor*, which means *drunken;* and, in using this name, there might have been allusion to Is. 28 : 1. The town lay in the valley between the mountains Ebal and Gerizim. See Judges 9 : 7. It afterwards bore the name *Neapolis*, and at the present day the name *Naplous* is given to a town on the same spot. ‖ *The parcel of ground that Jacob gave*, &c. In Gen. 48 : 22, we learn that Jacob made a special gift to Joseph of "a portion above his brethren." It was a piece of land which Jacob took by force of arms from the Amorites. In Gen. 33 : 19, we read that he bought a parcel of ground in the vicinity of Shechem. It was this, doubtless, which he gave to his son Joseph, and which is here spoken of. Probably, during some period of Jacob's ab-

6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore being wearied with *his* journey, sat thus on the well: *and* it was about the sixth hour.

7 There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water: Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.

8 (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.)

9 Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.

sence from that spot, the neighboring Amorites took possession of it, and Jacob was under the necessity of regaining it by force.

6. *Jacob's well.* There was a well there, which was called Jacob's; as, according to tradition, it was dug by Jacob. ‖ *Thus.* This word may refer to the circumstance that Jesus was fatigued, and that in *this fatigued condition* he sat down. It might also have been used in much the same way as our word *so* is employed, when we say of a person, "He was fatigued, and so he sat down." ‖ *On the well;* more properly, *at*, or *by*, the well. ‖ *The sixth hour;* twelve o'clock.

7. *There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water.* It had long been the practice, in those parts of the Eastern world, for females to perform this labor. See Gen. 24: 13, 14. Ex. 2: 16.

9. *Thou, being a Jew.* The woman knew that Jesus was a Jew from his general appearance and from his manner of speaking. There had, at a very early period, been some peculiarities in the dialect of the people who occupied the central parts of the land. See Judges 12: 6. ‖ *For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans.* This remark is not a part of the woman's reply to Jesus; but was inserted by the evangelist, as accounting for the manner in which the woman spoke. In this remark, the expression *no dealings* is simply equivalent to the expression *no friendly intercourse.* The fact that the disciples had gone into a Samaritan town to purchase food, shows that Jews and Samaritans might have *some dealings* with each other. But *friendship* they did not cultivate. Most of the Jews did indeed avoid all sorts of intercourse with the Samaritans. Some held, that it was unlawful to eat and drink a Samaritan's bread and wine, and that a Jew might as well eat swine's flesh. There were, however, among the Jews those who did not carry matters to such an extreme, and who regarded it as perfectly lawful to purchase from them necessary articles of food.

Various causes conspired to make the Jews unfriendly to the Samaritans. The separation of the ten tribes from Rehoboam's government (1 Kings 12: 16, 20) may be regarded as the commencement of the hostility. For the Samaritans originated from the remnants of the ten tribes and the colonists who were introduced into their territory by the Assyrian conqueror. See 2 Kings 17: 6, 24, 29, 34, 41. This mixed community practised idolatry. The Jews were subsequently carried into captivity in Babylon; and after seventy years they returned, by the decree of Cyrus, with permission to build their temple in Jerusalem. See Ezra 1: 1—4. The Samaritans proposed to unite with them in this work; but the Jews would not consent to the proposal. The Samaritans then endeavored to hinder the building (Ezra 4: 1—5). At a still later period, when the Jews entered into an engagement to divorce the heathen wives whom they had married, Manasseh, a brother of the high priest, having married the daughter of Sanballat, governor of Samaria, would not part from his wife (Neh. 13: 28); and when re

10 Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.

11 The woman saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?

12 Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle?

13 Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water, shall thirst again:

14 But whosoever drinketh of

quired either to put her away or to cease having any connection with the Jews' sacred rites, he preferred the latter, and went over to the Samaritans. His father-in-law, Sanballat, built for him a temple on mount Gerizim, in which he officiated. By various expedients other Jews were drawn over to the Samaritans. Jews, too, who had transgressed the laws, sought refuge among the Samaritans. Thus disputes arose between them, and particularly respecting the proper place of worshipping God. The Samaritans regarded as sacred only the five books of Moses; and they differed from the Jews in not receiving the traditions which the Jews regarded as authoritative. The Samaritans also indulged unfriendly feelings towards the Jews. See Luke 9: 53. Probably, however, the Samaritans were less bitter in their hostility.

10. *The gift of God;* the benefit which God has put within thy reach, of conversing with the Messiah, and of seeking blessings from him. || *Living water.* By this phrase Jesus meant *spiritual and immortal blessings*, such as are necessary for the welfare of the soul, as water is necessary for the well-being of the body.

11. The woman did not apprehend the meaning of Jesus, but supposed that he was speaking of natural water, of a superior quality, which *he* could give to *her*. In addition to her want of spiritual perception, as causing her to misapprehend his meaning, the term *living water* might signify, either *a supply for one's spiritual wants*, or *running water*, like that of fountains and streams, in distinction from water deposited in a cistern. The woman understood the phrase in this latter sense. *Thou hast nothing to draw with;* thou hast no bucket. || *Whence then, &c.* Perceiving that he had no vessel which he might let down into the well, she saw no means of his procuring water from this well, as the well was deep. This well was supplied by a running fountain, and was highly valued as furnishing water in abundance. She did not believe he could procure any elsewhere in all that region that would be equal to it. She therefore regarded his remark about *living water*, and that, too, professedly better than what the well contained, as scarcely worthy of confidence.

12. *Art thou greater, &c.* Supposing him to be a mere common man, and being proud of the early ancestors of the nation (for both Samaritans and Jews cherished the most profound respect for the worthies mentioned in the books of Moses), she appealed to the well-known character of Jacob, as showing that a better and more abundant spring of water could not be found in the region than what that well contained.

13, 14. *Jesus answered, &c.* Without directly correcting her mistake, and without formally comparing himself with Jacob, Jesus asserted, in metaphorical language, that the relief which the water of Jacob's well could give was only temporary, and was always followed by a return of thirst; but that the relief which his blessings would bestow would be permanent, enduring even to eternity; that the

the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

15 The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Go call thy husband, and come hither.

17 The woman answered and said, I have no husband. Jesus said unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband:

18 For thou hast had five husbands, and he whom thou now hast, is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly.

19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet.

20 Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that

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person who should receive his blessings would have in him a source of everlasting happiness. ‖ *A well of water;* more strictly, *a fountain, a spring of water.* ‖ *Into everlasting life;* not furnishing a temporary supply, but an ever-during supply, as supporting everlasting life. The water of an earthly fountain bubbles up for the support of the animal life, which yet must soon end; the water of the spiritual fountain bubbles up for the support of the soul's life, which will never end. The blessings of which Christ spoke, would furnish a satisfaction that would endure to eternity, leaving to the happy receiver no want unsupplied, and nothing to wish for, filling him with good, for time and eternity.

15. *Sir, give me, &c.* The woman did not yet apprehend our Lord's meaning. She was not accustomed to think on such subjects and had scarcely any elevation of mind. Perhaps, too, some word in the last remark of the Saviour, on which the meaning of the whole depended, was capable of being variously understood, especially by a person of a grovelling disposition.

16. Jesus, perceiving that the woman did not apprehend his meaning, changed the topic of conversation. His remarks, however, would not be lost. Hereafter, she would recall them, and understand them by the aid of further light from heaven. He well knew her character, and by the gravity of his conversation and general appearance he had gained her esteem. He wished her to know that he was the Messiah, and through her to benefit the people of the place. He soon excited in her mind the belief that he was a divinely commissioned teacher; and this belief he speedily directed to the point which he had in view.

18. *Is not thy husband.* The connection in which this remark is made, shows with sufficient clearness that the woman was living in an unlawful manner.

19. *That thou art a prophet.* Men divinely commissioned as religious teachers, were regarded as possessing, by virtue of their office, knowledge superior to that of others. Hence the knowledge which Jesus had shown of her character elevated him in her esteem as one who was at least a prophet.

20. In consequence of her now esteeming him to be a prophet, she thought him capable of settling the question which was agitated between the Jews and the Samaritans respecting the proper place of worship. *Our fathers worshipped in this mountain.* From the time of Manasseh's going over to the Samaritans (see on v. 9) and officiating in the temple which his father-in-law, Sanballat, had built for him, the Samaritans had become strongly attached to mount Gerizim as the place of worship. The temple on mount Gerizim was at a subsequent period, by compulsion of the

in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.

21 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father.

22 Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews.

heathen conqueror, Antiochus Epiphanes, dedicated to idolatrous worship; and was afterwards destroyed. The Samaritans, however, not erecting anew their temple, built an altar on mount Gerizim, and the spot was still sacred in their eyes. Sychar, in the immediate vicinity of which this conversation was held, lay between mount Ebal and mount Gerizim, so that the woman could point to the mountain. ‖ *In Jerusalem is the place*, &c. That God had selected Jerusalem as the place for the temple, is evident from several passages of the Old Testament. See 1 Kings 8: 16, 48. 9: 3. 11: 13. Ps. 76: 2. But the Samaritans received as sacred only the five books of Moses; and they contended that Gerizim was the place where the patriarchs had offered sacrifice, and where God had required, through Moses, that some most solemn ceremonies of their religion should be performed. See Deut. 27: 4; in which passage, instead of the word *Ebal*, the Samaritans maintained that the word *Gerizim* should be read. The woman seems merely to have stated the fact as to the difference of opinion, without proposing any inquiry; but it was manifestly her intention to draw from Jesus an expression of opinion in regard to this question, which was at that time so full of interest.

21. Jesus shaped his reply in such a manner as to show the woman that the question was an unimportant one, and quite unsuited to the nature of the new dispensation; that the *place* would not be hereafter regarded as of essential importance, but that God ought to be worshipped with *a sincere mind* in order to be worshipped acceptably. *Neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem;* neither here nor there, as the one exclusive place of performing acceptable worship.

22. But though the question as to the place of worship was, in reality, of no consequence, yet, since she desired information, the Saviour plainly decided the question in favor of the Jews, by observing that, in respect to worship, the Samaritans were less intelligent than the Jews. The Jews had in their possession all the books of the Old Testament, and hence possessed more abundant opportunities of knowing the will of God; for it was in other books than the five books of Moses that the information respecting the place of worship was to be found. The Samaritans, then, were comparatively ignorant in respect to this question. The Jews had the advantage over them. *Ye worship ye know not what*, &c. An exactly literal rendering of the verse would be, *Ye worship what ye know not; we worship what we know.* The words convey the idea, that the Samaritans were destitute of knowledge respecting him whom they worshipped, but that the Jews possessed knowledge. Now, as the topic of conversation was, Which is the *proper place* for worship? the knowledge here claimed for the Jews in contrast with the Samaritans must be knowledge respecting *that topic.* It should be stated that good judges of the original Greek suggest that the passage may be rendered, *You worship ignorantly, we worship knowingly;* that is, in respect to the topic of conversation, namely, which is the appointed place of worship? ‖ *For salvation is of the Jews.* The word *salvation* here means *the deliverance to be effected by the Messiah*, and is here equivalent to the word *Saviour.* The Messiah was *to be of the Jews*, to proceed from their nation; and since the Jews were thus distinguished, it was manifest that they were in possession of greater advantages than others were of knowing the divine will.

23 But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.

24 God *is* a Spirit: and they that worship him, must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.

25 The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things.

26 Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am *he*.

27 And upon this came his disciples, and marvelled that he talked with the woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?

28 The woman then left her water-pot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men,

23. *In spirit and in truth;* with the soul and with sincerity; with a sincere mind, in distinction from an outward ceremonial worship, which might be performed without true love. No worship could at any time have been pleasing to God that did not proceed from the soul; yet he had seen fit to connect with his worship a system of external rites to be performed in a prescribed place. This outward worship ought to have been performed with sincerity. But now, our Lord says to the woman, it is *peculiarly* to the inward state of mind that the Father looks; this whole system of ceremonial worship hastens to a close, and questions about the proper place of worship are unsuitable to the new order of things. ‖ *For the Father seeketh, &c.* This is one reason why spiritual worship should be preferred; God desires it.

24. *God is a Spirit.* This is another reason showing that spiritual worship is necessary. God is not clothed with a body, not confined to place, not affected by the outward circumstances of grandeur, or of meanness. He is a pure spirit, and looks at the souls of men. In worshipping such a Being, the principal aim should be, that the worship proceed from a sincere soul.

25. *I know that Messias cometh.* The Samaritans, as well as the Jews, expected the Messiah. Their expectation arose from those passages in the books of Moses which refer to the Messiah, and from the knowledge which had been preserved among them since the time when their ancestors separated from the rest of the Jews. The opinions current at that time among them would doubtless continue and be adopted by the descendants of the mixed community which was formed by the colonists from Assyria uniting with the remnant of the Israelites. See on v. 9. ‖ *Which is called Christ.* These are the words of the evangelist, explaining to his readers that the word *Messias*, which the woman had used, was the same as the word *Christ*, with which they were more familiar. The words should be placed in a parenthesis. ‖ *He will tell us all things.* The Messiah was regarded as having ultimate authority, particularly on questions pertaining to religion. The Samaritans appear to have regarded the Messiah much more in the light of a prophet and a spiritual deliverer, than did the mass of the Jewish nation.

27. *Marvelled that he talked with the woman.* The disciples wondered at his talking with her, because she did not belong to his acquaintances, and was a Samaritan. The unworthy sentiments which some of the later Jewish Rabbins have expressed concerning the female sex, as being unsuitable to enjoy the attention and instruction of a religious teacher, were not common in the times of Christ. Among his intimate friends were several females; and this circumstance was never mentioned as a ground of disesteem. But in the present instance, the woman was a Samaritan; and hence the disciples wondered at their Master's conversing with her.

29 Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?

30 Then they went out of the city, and came unto him.

31 In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat.

32 But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of.

33 Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him *aught* to eat?

34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.

36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth, and he that reapeth, may rejoice together.

37 And herein is that saying

29. *Which told me all things*, &c. A very natural remark from one, the leading events of whose life had been disclosed by a stranger.

32. *I have meat to eat that ye know not of.* That which gives *support* and *refreshment* to a person is, figuratively, his *food*. The Saviour wished to convey the idea that he had been enjoying refreshment of a kind which they were not thinking of. His work of teaching and contributing to the salvation of souls strengthened and refreshed his spirit.

34. *My meat;* my food, that which sustains and cheers me.

35. *There are yet four months*, &c. Probably the Saviour now saw a company of Samaritans from the town, excited by the woman's representations, coming to converse with him. For the encouragement of his disciples, he pointed to them as furnishing an opportunity of gathering a spiritual harvest. The harvest, too, which now invited their labors, was one that very speedily followed the sowing of the seed. While in respect to a natural harvest, several months must pass after sowing, in respect to the spiritual harvest, now before them, seed time and harvest seemed to be together. The mention of *four months* was founded on what usually took place in respect to the most common products of Palestine, two whole months and parts of two other months being spoken of as four months. ‖ *White already to the harvest.* Allusion was made to the yellowish appearance of a ripe grain-field.

36. Another consideration for encouraging the disciples was, that the laborers in this spiritual harvest would be amply compensated, and the results of their labor would be abiding. *Gathereth fruit unto eternal life.* The reaper of a field of grain lays up fruit for *this* life; the spiritual reaper's labors have respect to *immortal* life. His own recompense will be enduring, and those who are benefited by him will enjoy eternal life. ‖ *Both he that soweth and he that reapeth*, &c. When a harvest is gathered in, not only does the reaper rejoice, but also the one who sowed the grain. The labors of both were necessary; and the final result has been effected by their joint efforts; so that both classes of laborers rejoice together. In application to the present instance, Jesus had performed the labor of sowing by instructing the woman, and the disciples were now to be employed in further teaching these Samaritans, and confirming their belief in him. They would assist in reaping a spiritual harvest.

37. There occurred to the Saviour's mind a common saying, which was applicable to the topic of conversa-

true, One soweth, and another reapeth.

38 I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors.

39 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed on him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did.

40 So when the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would tarry with them: and he abode there two days.

41 And many more believed, because of his own word;

42 And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard *him* ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world.

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tion, and which would give additional encouragement to the disciples. It often happens, that *one sows and another reaps*. This saying sometimes has a melancholy application; that is, when a man labors in vain, deriving no benefit from his labors, but, as it would seem, toiling for others only. This, however, was not the use which our Lord now made of it. The idea which he conveyed was this; one man's labors prepare the way for another man's; some men find all the preparatory labor performed, and have only the happy labor of gathering up the results produced by the toils of other men.

38. *I sent you;* I have sent, or appointed. ‖ *Other men labored;* that is, all who had preceded the disciples in the work of religious cultivation.

In connection with the work which lay immediately before the disciples, namely, in respect to the Samaritans, the Saviour directed their minds to their work in general. He had called them into service as successors of former laborers; and they would find that much labor had already been performed; that preparation had been made, and that they would gather up the results of other men's labors.

Remarks. 1. Jesus has furnished his ministers and followers with an example of untiring devotion to the service of God, and of sacred delight in it. v. 34. How false is the notion that the service of God is gloomy!

2. What encouragement there is for ministers and all Christians to labor for the spiritual welfare of men! v. 35—38. The results of their labors may soon appear — the immortal souls of men are benefited — labors now performed are a carrying forward of what good men long ago commenced — every one who labors for Christ will share in the ultimate joy, when the Lord's purposes are all accomplished.

3. If immediate success be not enjoyed, let no servant of Christ be disheartened. There must be sowing as well as reaping. The sower will, hereafter, rejoice as well as the reaper. The labors of the sower will be acknowledged by the Lord of the harvest, as well as those of the reaper.

40. *That he would tarry with them.* How cheering to observe this welcome reception of Jesus by the Samaritans! Compare, as a contrast, Matt. 8: 34. Luke 9: 53.

42. *The Saviour of the world.* The Samaritans appear to have cherished more spiritual and generous views respecting the Messiah, than the Jews did. The Samaritans did not indulge the same national hopes as the Jews, nor were they under the influence of such teachers as were the Jews. Hence they rather viewed the Messiah as a religious teacher and reformer, and as a spiritual deliverer, whose benefits were to be widely enjoyed. Among them, as well as among the Jews, there was, doubtless, a mixture of characters. The people

43 Now, after two days he departed thence, and went into Galilee.

44 For Jesus himself testified, that a prophet hath no honor in his own country.

45 Then when he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all the things that he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast.

46 So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

47 When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

48 Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

49 The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

50 Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

51 And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth.

52 Then inquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

53 So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

54 This *is* again the second miracle *that* Jesus did, when he was come out of Judea into Galilee.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER this there was a feast of the Jews: and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

2 Now there is at Jerusalem, by the sheep *market*, a pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue, Bethesda, having five porches.

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whom Jesus had just met, were probably among the best in the nation, as to religious character.

43. *After two days;* the two days mentioned in v. 40.

44. *A prophet hath no honor in his own country;* more properly, *in his own town.* See Matt. 13: 57. This remark shows either that Jesus, though he went to Galilee, yet did not visit Nazareth, his own town; or that, though he had visited Nazareth, he did not remain there, but spent his time in the other parts of Galilee. It was probably during this visit to Galilee, that he suffered the ill treatment in Nazareth mentioned by Luke, 4: 28, 29.

45. *At Jerusalem at the feast.* See 2: 23.

46. *Nobleman;* an officer, probably, in the employ of Herod Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee.

50. *Liveth;* is recovered.

54. *The second miracle that Jesus did;* that is, at Cana. See v. 46.

CHAPTER V.

1. *A feast of the Jews;* one of the religious festivals.

2. *Sheep market.* The word *market* was added by the translators, as

3 In these lay a great multitude of impotent folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.

4 For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in, was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.

5 And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.

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is shown by its being printed in Italics. The word *gate* is preferable; because we learn from Neh. 3: 1, 32. 12: 39, that there was a gate so called; while no mention occurs of a sheep *market*. ‖ *A pool*; a bathing pool suitable for diseased and infirm persons. ‖ *Hebrew tongue*; the language spoken in Judea by the Jews in the time of our Lord. It was not the pure Hebrew of the Old Testament, but a dialect founded on it, and mingled with other languages. ‖ *Bethesda*. The meaning of this word is *house of mercy*; the conveniences connected with the bath having been erected for charitable purposes, and the bath itself being an instance of God's kindness. ‖ *Porches*; porticoes, open probably at the sides, and covered with a roof, so as to afford defence to those who should repair to the bath.

3. *Impotent folk*; infirm, diseased people. ‖ *Blind*; by disease, not from birth. See 9: 32. ‖ *Halt*; crippled. ‖ *Withered*. See on Matt. 12: 10.

4. *An angel*. The operations of divine providence, particularly those of a striking character, whether according to the ordinary course of events or otherwise, are sometimes ascribed in the Bible to the agency of angels; they being regarded as God's ministers, and an acknowledgment of God's agency being thus made. See Ps. 34: 7. 91: 11, 12. Compare Matt. 1: 20. ‖ *At a certain season*; not at any regular times; but, as we say, at times.

Whether the cures performed at this bath were miraculous, or not, is made a question. Without undertaking to decide, it may be observed, that there are some reasons which favor the belief that they were not considered as miraculous in the time of our Saviour. 1. There is no allusion in the New Testament to this pool as a place where miraculous cures were performed. 2. There is no intimation in any Jewish writer, that there was in Jerusalem a pool endowed with miraculous powers. If the pool had been thus regarded, there could hardly fail to have been mention of it. 3. Real miracles are mentioned by our Lord as belonging expressly to him and his disciples, as attestations of his divine mission. See Matt. 11: 5. John 15: 24. Our Saviour's healing power would not have been so important as bearing testimony to his divine mission, if the Jews could have appealed to a pool, where miracles were wrought in behalf of the sick among them.

On the other hand, the idea of a miraculous agency seems to be conveyed by the statement, that "whosoever first after the troubling [the agitating] of the water stepped in, was made whole of *whatsoever* disease he had." Perhaps, however, this statement was meant to express the *great variety* of complaints which were included under the three sorts of infirmity mentioned in the third verse.

It is stated as probable, by some writers, that there was at this place a mineral spring, which had been proved to possess medicinal qualities, when, through the influence of subterranean heat, or other causes, there was a bubbling up of the water from the bottom. During this agitation, occurring in the kind providence of God, the mineral and medicinal qualities of the water spread through the mass, and a person who should instantly bathe himself, experienced relief. At the subsiding of the water, the healing quality was exhausted. Mineral waters have been known to

6 When Jesus saw him lie, and knew that he had been now a long time *in that case*, he saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?

7 The impotent man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.

8 Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.

9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and on the same day was the Sabbath.

10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the Sabbath-day; it is not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed.

11 He answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.

12 Then asked they him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed, and walk?

13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in *that* place.

14 Afterward Jesus findeth him in the temple, and said unto him, Behold, thou art made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.

15 The man departed, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole.

be serviceable in such complaints as are enumerated in the third verse.

6. *Lie;* lying down. || *Wilt thou?* dost thou wish?

8. *Take up thy bed.* What is here called *a bed*, was, at most, merely a small litter, furnished, probably, with a rug or a skin. See on Mark 2 : 4.

9. *It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed.* The regulations respecting the Sabbath, as taught by the Jewish doctors of the law, were exceedingly minute. Whatever could be called servile labor was prohibited; and as many as thirty particular sorts of labor were specified as transgressions. Such passages as Jer. 17 : 21, 22, they probably perverted. See on Matt. 12 : 10.

10. *The Jews.* Not those who were standing by (see v. 13) when the cure was wrought, but some other Jews, who saw the man carrying his bed.

11. *He that made me whole, the same said unto me, &c.* The man had no doubt, that he, who could miraculously cure diseases, had also authority to permit him to carry his bed on the Sabbath; and he thought no other excuse was needed. As ancient prophets had often wrought miracles, he believed that the person who cured him was at least a prophet; and it was a received opinion among the Jews that, by the command of a prophet, the ordinary rules respecting the Sabbath might be dispensed with.

13. *Wist;* knew.

14. *Sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.* Jesus was acquainted with the man's past life, and traced his disorder to some vices of which he had been guilty. He therefore warned him in respect to the future. He wished to make him sensible that the calamities which befall men, proceed from a righteous providence; and that, if the kindness he had now received should not have a good effect on his character, he would expose himself to a still severer endurance of God's displeasure. The Saviour's remark would apply to any exercise of God's displeasure against sin, whether in this world or in the world to come.

15. *Told the Jews, &c.* He gave information, not with an ill design,

16 And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the Sabbath-day.

17 But Jesus answered them, My Father worketh hitherto, and I work.

18 Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also, that God was

but, it may be, for the purpose of still further defending himself against the accusation of having violated the Sabbath, and for the sake of showing his gratitude to his benefactor. How naturally, too, might he think it desirable to spread abroad a knowledge of such a person as Jesus, that others might receive benefit from him!

16. *Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus;* not the Jews in private life, but the men of distinction, and probably members of the Sanhedrim, who would feel themselves charged with the execution of the laws which they pretended had been violated, and who would gladly have found a good pretext for opposing Jesus, and even for taking away his life. ‖ *Sought to slay him.* Sabbath-breakers were to be punished with death. See Ex. 35: 2. Num. 15: 32—36. However willing the rulers of the Jews might have been to relax either the law or any specific penalties whenever it suited their convenience, they were very willing to proceed against Jesus to any extremities for which they could have the slightest pretext.

17. *My Father worketh hitherto.* That is, up to this time, without any intermission, my Father has been constantly occupied in sustaining the world, and carrying on the work of providence. The Sabbath does not occasion any interruption of his working. ‖ *And I work.* That is, I, like him, carry on my work without being interrupted by the Sabbath. Be it the Sabbath, or be it any other day, I carry on my work as God carries on his.

18. *That God was his Father;* literally, that God was his own Father; his Father in a peculiar sense, quite different from that in which pious men speak of God as their Father.

‖ *Making himself equal with God.* That is, claiming to himself an authority equal to that of God, and thus, in their judgment, setting up himself as a God, with designs and interests of his own, diverse from those of Jehovah.

The assertion which our Lord had made in the 17th verse was indeed a very remarkable one; such as no mere man could justly make, and such as could be vindicated only on the ground, that he was *not* a mere man, but that he was *the Word* who was in the beginning with God, and was God, and who had been made flesh. See 1: 1, 2, 14. But the Jews before whom he was now standing, did not know him in this exalted character; they recognized in him only what was obvious to their own sight and minds, namely, a human being; and, withal, a human being against whom they were prejudiced, whom they wished to injure, and whose language they were disposed to pervert. Hence they regarded him in the light of an enthusiast, who had advanced a very extravagant claim, professing, in short, to be equal to God; and if a man, like him, should thus claim to be God, they would naturally represent him as claiming an independence of God, as acting on a plan of his own, without reference to God, and as claiming interests of his own, distinct from those of God. They probably affected to regard Jesus, as we should now regard a man who should, in self-vindication, use language that might seem to us as claiming a divine authority dwelling in himself. We should think such a man highly presumptuous, and we might say to him, You make yourself equal with God; you make yourself a God; you set up a

his Father, making himself equal with God.

19 Then answered Jesus, and said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.

20 For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth him all things that himself doeth: and he will show him greater works than these, that ye may marvel.

21 For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth *them;* even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.

22 For the Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son:

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claim that is in opposition to God. Such is the thought in reference to which our Saviour made his subsequent address; in which address he vindicated himself from the charge of claiming to be independent of, and distinct from, God in his plans and pursuits. In this address, he did not directly touch the question, whether, or not, he was a partaker of the divine nature; he replied to the question, whether he was disregarding God, and cherishing interests and pursuing plans diverse from those of God. He strongly assured the Jews, that, so far from there being such a disregard and such a diversity as they represented, there was the most intimate union between him and the Father in design and in operation. His language is indeed such, as finds its full explanation only in the fact that he was a partaker of the divine nature as well as of the human. But this he did not state distinctly; he left them to draw inferences from statements which would naturally lead to such a conclusion. Thus, by his manner of speaking, he prepared the way for the more direct declarations which would afterwards be made respecting his exalted nature.

19. *Of himself.* That is, of his own will and authority as distinct from those of the Father. ‖ *Seeth.* This word is used with reference to the mind, as well as to the bodily eyes, and indicates *a full knowledge.* The idea is explained by the next words, which show that between the Father and the Son there is a complete agreement in all their works, so that the works of the Father are also the works of the Son.

20. *Showeth him all things, &c.* The Son is a partaker of the counsels and purposes of the Father as to all things. There is nothing in the Father's mind that is not also communicated to the Son's. ‖ *Greater works than these, &c.* Jesus had already wrought miracles, besides the healing of the infirm man at Bethesda. The admiration of the beholders had often been excited. But he assured them that far more remarkable things were yet to be performed by him. What those things would be, he proceeded to explain. ‖ *That ye may marvel.* Not that those greater operations were *designed* merely to excite astonishment, but that one of the consequences resulting from such displays of divine power and knowledge would be, astonishment on the part of the beholders. So great would those works be, that they would command a far deeper admiration than had yet been expressed.

21. *Quickeneth them;* imparteth life. This is one of the greater works to which the Saviour alluded; namely, the resurrection of the dead, not so much to life in this world, as to the unending life in eternity. This power of imparting life to the dead resided in the Saviour, as in God. There is evidence that the Jews had some vague expectation that there would be a resurrection of the dead when the Messiah should appear.

22. *Hath committed all judgment*

23 That all *men* should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father which hath sent him.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.

26 For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself;

27 And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

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unto the Son. This is the other of those greater works; namely, the performing of the general judgment at the end of the world. Compare Matt. 25: 31—46. Acts 17: 31. 2 Cor. 5: 10.

These two, the resurrection of the dead and the general judgment, are to be performed by the Son. Such is the arrangement which the Father has made; and such is the honor that is conferred on the Son.

23. *That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.* The official dignity which pertains to the Son, as the final judge and awarder of men's destiny, and as performing this office perfectly in accordance with the mind of the Father, presents a just claim for the same respect to be paid to the Son as is due to the Father. He will act perfectly according to the Father's will, and by the Father's arrangement.

24. Having brought to view two great classes of operations to be performed by him in his official capacity, Jesus next solemnly pronounced himself to be *the Saviour*, by obeying whom eternal life would be secured. *Heareth my word;* receiveth and obeyeth my instructions. ‖ *Hath.* This may be regarded as the present tense used for the future, indicating the certainty of everlasting bliss to those who should become disciples of Jesus Christ; or, the actual commencement on earth of the bliss which the Messiah bestows may be intimated. ‖ *From death unto life.* The word *death* is often metaphorically used in the Scriptures to denote *spiritual misery; life*, on the contrary, denotes *spiritual happiness.* The idea here conveyed by our Lord is, that a true follower of the Messiah is delivered from the condemnation and misery connected with sin, and becomes a partaker of spiritual and eternal bliss.

25. The Saviour again referred to those greater things which were yet to be performed by him, as manifestations of his power and of his official dignity. *The hour is coming, and now is, &c.* The Saviour's life-giving power, which is to be so fully displayed at the general resurrection, was also soon, to some extent, to be manifested. Some of the dead were to be recalled to life speedily. The time was just at hand. According to the common arrangement of the events related in the Gospels, Jesus had not yet restored to life any dead persons. But shortly after this, he restored the daughter of Jairus (Matt. 9: 23—26), the young man of Nain (Luke 7: 11—17), and Lazarus (John 11: 43, 44).

26. *Life in himself;* a life-giving power in himself. ‖ *So hath he given to the Son, &c.* Compare verse 21, which shows that, while there is mentioned an official designation of the Son by the Father to the work of raising the dead, there are also in the Son his own personal will and ability for this work.

27. Compare v. 22. *The Son of man;* the Messiah. The final judg

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,

29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.

30 I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

31 If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true.

32 There is another that beareth witness of me, and I know that the witness which he witnesseth of me is true.

33 Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.

34 But I receive not testimony from man: but these things I say, that ye might be saved.

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ment is to be performed by the Messiah, not only because he is the only-begotten Son of God, partaking of the divine nature; but also because he is the Son of man, and holds a peculiar relation also to the human race. How interesting the thought, that the Saviour and the Judge of men, while, on the one hand, he is keenly alive to the honor of God, has also, on the other hand, a most tender sympathy for human beings!

28. *All that are in the graves shall hear his voice.* Still dwelling on those greater things (v. 20), and alluding to what he had mentioned in v. 25, as *soon* to take place, he distinctly announced the resurrection of *all* the dead at his bidding.

29. *Resurrection of life;* the future state of bliss.

30. *Of mine own self;* that is, independently of the will and authority of the Father, as though I had a separate interest, a will and a plan of my own, irrespective of him. See v. 19. ‖ *As I hear;* that is, from the Father; as I perceive the mind of my Father. ‖ *I judge.* He alluded probably to the final judgment. ‖ *My judgment;* the decisions which I shall pronounce.

31. *If I bear witness.* Having so distinctly declared his intimate connection with the Father, the supreme authority which was vested in him in respect to the human race, and his being appointed to the work of raising the dead and performing the final judgment, Jesus next proceeded to bring forward some appropriate evidences that he really was the Messiah, to whom all this dignity pertained. The evidence which he produced was threefold: 1. The testimony of John the Baptist. vs. 32, &c. 2. The testimony of his miracles. v. 36. 3. The testimony of the Father given in the Scriptures. vs. 37, &c. ‖ *Is not true;* is not valid, or adequate in respect to a legal investigation. Because testimony respecting himself, and given by himself, might be suspected as partial. In the view of men, it might be liable to exception. A person's testimony respecting himself may be perfectly true; yet, as it is of personal interest, it may not be regarded as valid, but should be set aside. It is in this legal respect that the Saviour here disclaimed his own testimony.

32, 33. *Another;* that is, John the Baptist. Compare 1: 29—34.

34. *I receive not testimony from man.* Jesus was not dependent on man for testimony; his principal testimony came from a higher source. Nor did he eagerly grasp at the testimony of John, honorable though it was. Jesus had no selfish ends in view by appealing to the testimony of John. ‖ *But — that ye might be saved.* The anxious desire of Jesus that his hearers might be saved, induced him to bring distinctly to view the testimony of John. That testimony was happily

35 He was a burning and a shining light: and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light.

36 But I have greater witness than *that* of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.

37 And the Father himself which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

38 And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not.

39 Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: And they are they which testify of me.

40 And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.

41 I receive not honor from men.

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adapted to convince them that he was the Messiah, and it was testimony of which they could easily judge. John's character would give weight to any declarations which he had made, and he had made ample declarations respecting Jesus.

35. *A burning and a shining light;* an eminent teacher. Compare Matt. 11: 11. ‖ *Ye were willing to rejoice;* ye were glad. ‖ *For a season;* a short time. When John had fully developed his sterling piety, and his uncompromising devotion to the truth, the Pharisees became disinclined towards him. See Luke 7: 30.

36. *The same works that I do,* &c. Our Lord next appealed to his miracles, as proofs that he had been sent forth by the Father. These miracles were a divine attestation in favor of the claim which he made to be the promised Messiah. To this sort of evidence he appealed on other occasions also. See 10: 25, 37. 14: 10, 11. 15: 24.

37. *And the Father himself,* &c. Our Lord produced, as a third distinct evidence, the testimony of the Father. This testimony was given not in an audible manner, nor by the Father's becoming visible to their eyes. It had been given in the Scriptures, the word of God, which yet they did not cordially receive. ‖ *Ye have neither heard his voice,* &c. The testimony of God was given not in an audible, nor a visible, manner.

38. *Whom he hath sent;* whom he has sent as the promised Messiah. The Jews had imbibed utterly erroneous opinions respecting the Messiah, because they did not regard *him* in the very light in which God's word had presented him. By their not receiving Jesus, they showed clearly, that their minds were not imbued with the instructions of God.

39. *Search the Scriptures.* It is generally thought, that our Saviour did not here direct the Jews to search the Scriptures; but rather acknowledged that they were in the habit of searching them. The words may be translated, *Ye search the Scriptures.* In these God's testimony may be found, to which the Saviour was appealing. ‖ *For in them ye think ye have,* &c. The Jews professed a high regard for the Scriptures, as revealing the will of God, and showing how to obtain *eternal life.* ‖ *They are they,* &c. It is those very Scriptures which testify of the Messiah, and which I, as the Messiah, am fulfilling.

40. *And.* Probably the word *but* would better express the force of the original word. Thus: You search the Scriptures, and it is they which testify of me; but you will not come, &c. ‖ *Come to me;* confide in me.

41. *I receive not honor,* &c. Though Jesus had been vindicating his own cause, and though he had just expressed regret that the Jews would

42 But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you.

43 I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.

44 How can ye believe, which receive honor one of another, and seek not the honor that *cometh* from God only?

45 Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is *one* that accuseth you, *even* Moses, in whom ye trust.

46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

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not receive him, yet he was not at all anxious for human favor.

42. He then traced their unwillingness to receive him in his proper character, to its true causes. These were two; first, the absence of real piety in their hearts; and next, as expressed in v. 44, their fondness for one another's good opinion, their vain ambition.

43. *Shall come;* should come. || *Ye will receive;* you would receive. Alas! how true was this declaration! Many, during the troublesome times which afterwards befell the nation, pretended to be the Messiah, and obtained followers. None of these pretended Messiahs rose above the prejudices and desires of the people, and gave true, spiritual instruction.

44. *How can ye believe,* &c. Fondness for human applause, and the absence of a supreme regard to the approbation of God, effectually hindered the principal men among the Jews from admitting the claims of Jesus. To acknowledge him as the Messiah at that time, required of them a strength of piety and an elevation above human favor, to which they were strangers.

45—47. Having made so serious charges against them, Jesus then wholly disclaimed any ill-will towards them, and any desire to appear as their accuser before God. Nor was there need that he should bring an accusation against them. The writings of Moses, for whom they professed so high a regard, and whose followers they called themselves, would furnish an accusation. Moses and the other writers of the Old Testament, had spoken of the Messiah with sufficient clearness to secure the assent of candid and pious persons to the claims of Jesus. Hence those who strenuously persisted in withholding their faith from Jesus, clearly showed that they did not in heart believe the writings of Moses, and that they were not cherishing such a spirit as those writings enjoined.

Remarks. 1. A scrupulous attention to outward religious observances may consist with the utter absence of love to God, and may be connected with an insatiable thirst for the good opinion of men. v. 10, compared with vs. 42, 44.

2. The calm and dignified manner in which our Lord spoke on this occasion, is worthy of admiration. He was conscious of being the Messiah, and of possessing attributes unspeakably above those of a mere man. See v. 17. Yet he asserted his claims and appealed to the proper evidence, with entire freedom from the desire of pleasing men. He exposed the wickedness of his adversaries, and warned them of the doom which they were incurring, with perfect self-possession, and without indignation.

3. We cannot repose too strong a confidence in Jesus Christ as our Saviour; nor need we fear that we shall have too exalted an opinion of him, or shall cherish too great a love and esteem for him. The more we honor the Son, the more do we honor the Father; and the more we pay re-

CHAPTER VI.

AFTER these things Jesus went over the sea of Galilee, which is *the sea* of Tiberias.

2 And a great multitude followed him, because they saw his miracles which he did on them that were diseased.

3 And Jesus went up into a mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.

4 And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.

5 When Jesus then lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?

6 (And this he said to prove him: for he himself knew what he would do.)

7 Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may take a little.

8 One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him,

9 There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many?

10 And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. (Now there was much grass in the place.) So the men sat down in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes, as much as they would.

12 When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

13 Therefore they gathered *them* together, and filled twelve

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gard to the Father, the more disposed shall we be to cherish a deep reverence for the Son. v. 23.

4. The habit of diligently studying the Scriptures is commendable. We ought to study them with candor, and submit to their guidance. v. 39.

5. True love to God will guard us against many religious errors. v. 42.

6. Desire for human applause is exceedingly dangerous. The approbation of God is unspeakably valuable; and seeking for that will elevate us above the influence of men's flatteries and frowns. v. 44. "The fear of man bringeth a snare." Prov. 29: 25.

CHAPTER VI.

1—14. Compare Matt. 14: 13—21. Mark 6: 32—44. Luke 9: 10—17. *After these things*. This expression is indefinite, not meaning *immediately after* the things mentioned in the preceding chapter. A considerable interval of time had elapsed. What is related in the preceding chapter occurred in Jerusalem during one of the festivals. See 5: 1. Jesus was now in Galilee, and another festival (see v. 4) was at hand.

6. *To prove him;* to try him, whether he would express confidence in the ability of Jesus to produce a sufficient supply of food.

7. *Pennyworth;* the coin which is frequently mentioned in the Gospels, and which was equivalent, as some compute, to about fourteen cents of our money.

10. *Sit down;* recline, as was usual at taking a meal.

12. *Gather up the fragments*, &c. Though Jesus was able miraculously to furnish any amount of food, he strictly forbade wastefulness. We

baskets with the fragments of the five barley-loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world.

15 When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

16 And when even was *now* come, his disciples went down unto the sea,

17 And entered into a ship, and went over the sea toward Capernaum. And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them.

18 And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew.

19 So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship: and they were afraid.

20 But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid.

21 Then they willingly received him into the ship: and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went.

22 The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there, save that one whereinto his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his disciples were gone away alone;

23 (Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks:)

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ought to be neither anxious about the future (see Matt. 6: 25), nor regardless of those present advantages which may supply our necessities in time to come.

14. *That Prophet.* The Messiah was sometimes regarded as the great religious guide and revealer of God's will. As such, he was foretold in Deut. 18: 15.

15. *To make him a king.* According to the opinions cherished among the Jews, the Messiah was to be a great earthly king. They were very uneasy under the Roman yoke; and the company who were now with Jesus, struck with admiration at the miracle which he had wrought, would gladly have lent their aid in effecting a revolution, and in making Jesus, in their own sense of the title, king of the Jews. ‖ *Into a mountain himself alone.* Compare Mark 6: 46.

16—21. Compare Matthew 14: 22—36.

19. *Five and twenty, or thirty, furlongs;* about four miles. ‖ *They see Jesus.* But they did not know that it was he. It was too early in the morning for them to see distinctly. See Matt. 14: 25.

21. *Immediately;* very speedily. We often use such expressions as *immediately, at once,* &c., meaning *very soon.* There is no reason for thinking that the vessel was urged forward miraculously.

22. *On the other side of the sea.* That is, on the eastern side where Jesus had fed the multitude. ‖ *That there was none other boat there;* or, that there *had been* there only the one boat in which the disciples had departed on the preceding evening.

23. *Howbeit,* &c. The information given in this verse was necessary in

24 When the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus.

25 And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

26 Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27 Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

28 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

29 Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

30 They said therefore unto him, What sign showest thou

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order to explain how the multitude had it in their power to cross the sea in boats, when they went to the western side, seeking for Jesus. For, previously to this company's arriving, there had been only one boat, and in that the disciples had gone. The boats now spoken of had brought over to the eastern side a new company, after the miracle had been wrought. ‖ *Tiberias;* a town, so called, in honor of Tiberius Cesar, on the south-west part of the sea of Galilee.

24. *Came to Capernaum.* This they knew to be the place of our Lord's usual residence; and towards this place the disciples had sailed. See v. 17.

26. *Jesus answered them,* &c. Whether he returned a direct reply to the question which they had proposed, does not appear. Jesus wished to employ the occasion in a profitable manner, and he at once directed their thoughts to their spiritual interests. As, in the case of the Samaritan woman from whom he had asked water, he gave instruction respecting the water of life (4th chapter), so, in the present instance, having recently furnished a supply of food for the body, he drew from that circumstance instruction respecting spiritual food, or blessings pertaining to the soul and to eternal life. ‖ *Not because ye saw the miracles.* It was not because the miracles of Jesus were a proof that his instructions ought to be received, but it was for inferior purposes, that they had sought him.

27. *Meat which perisheth;* food which sustains merely the body, and is, therefore, of short duration. ‖ *Meat which endureth,* &c.; food for the soul, nourishing it for eternal bliss. Our Lord's direction was, Seek not earthly good, but spiritual and eternal good. ‖ *Shall give;* can give. ‖ *Him hath God the Father sealed;* him has God clearly approved, as being the Messiah, sent to bestow on men blessings of everlasting duration. What the evidences furnished by the Father were, see 5: 36—39.

28. *What shall we do?* Perceiving that Jesus referred to their eternal welfare, and regarding this as connected with their living in a manner pleasing to God, the people inquired what particular deeds would be most acceptable to him. ‖ *Works of God;* works pleasing to God, such as he requires.

29. *The work of God;* that which he particularly requires. ‖ *That ye believe on him,* &c.; that ye confide in me, and become my disciples.

30. As Jesus now claimed their belief in him, and their submission to his guidance, they demanded new evidence of his right thus to claim their

then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

31 Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

32 Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33 For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

34 Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

35 And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that

belief and obedience. *What sign?—what dost thou work?* They had on the preceding day witnessed a miracle that had drawn forth expressions of admiration. It is possible, however, that this question arose from some who had not witnessed that miracle; or this demand for *a sign* might have had reference to a particular kind of miracle—*a sign from heaven.* Their ancestors had acknowledged the divine authority of Moses, and had submitted to his guidance, because, among other reasons, they were miraculously fed with manna, food descending from the air, or from heaven.

31. *Bread from heaven.* See Ps. 78: 24. Allusion was made to the fact, that the Israelites, during their journey through the Arabian wilderness, were not sustained by ordinary bread, but by manna which descended, as dew, from heaven, from the upper region of the air. Their food came from above, and was manifestly provided in a manner which showed the special providence of God over them while under the care of Moses. See Ex. 16: 14—35.

32. *That bread from heaven.* The word *that* is, here, equivalent to the word *the;* and the idea is, Moses did not give you *the true* heavenly food. The food which was given in the wilderness, though furnished by the special providence of God, was only earthly food, sustaining the body.

33. *The bread of God;* the food which well deserves to be called *food prepared and given by him,* nourishment *for the soul.* ‖ *Is he,* &c.; more properly, *is that which cometh,* &c. Though the Saviour meant *himself,* yet he was still using figurative language, which he explained in v. 35. Here he is describing the bread which God had given for the soul. It really had come down from God, and was intended for the happiness, not of one particular nation, but of the human race. ‖ *Giveth life.* As ordinary bread nourishes life, and imparts vigor to the body, so does the bread from heaven nourish the life of the soul.

34. *Evermore give us,* &c. Whether the people fully apprehended our Lord's meaning, and desired spiritual blessings, appears doubtful by the manner in which he replied to them. They needed further instruction in regard to the spiritual necessities of men. Like the Samaritan woman (4: 15), some of them at least might have been still cherishing the thought that earthly good was promised by Jesus.

35. *I am the bread of life;* I am the giver of spiritual and everlasting blessings. As from earthly food the body derives nourishment, so from me proceeds spiritual and immortal bliss. ‖ *He that cometh to me—he that believeth on me.* These expressions have both the same meaning; namely, he that relies on me for spiritual blessings and becomes my disciple; he that submits to my guidance and obeys my instructions. ‖ *Shall never hunger—never thirst.* The words *hunger* and *thirst,* used figura-

cometh to me, shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me, shall never thirst.

36 But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

37 All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.

38 For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.

39 And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

40 And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life:

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tively, express the feeling of *ungratified desire*, the *longing for blessings;* in one word, *misery*. The idea, then, of the Saviour was this: He who becomes my disciple shall have all his wants supplied, shall not be miserable, but shall possess true and permanent bliss.

36. *Ye believe not.* In order to derive from the Saviour this spiritual and abiding good, a person must *trust in him* and be his disciple. But those whom he was addressing had not submitted themselves to him; and hence it was that they were still unhappy, and still needed so much to ask for blessings.

37. *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.* By this remark the Saviour conveyed to the Jews the idea, that though *they* might reject him, and fail to gain the blessings which he came to bestow, yet the great object of his coming would not be lost. For the Father had determined that success should attend his cause. However unwilling to believe on him those might be to whom the Saviour was speaking, yet he would not lack followers; for the Father had given to him multitudes of the human race. Thus the Son was assured, that his coming into this world as the Saviour, would not be in vain; he should have followers to whom would be given spiritual and eternal life. Compare Is. 53: 10—12. John 17: 2. Eph. 1: 3—12. ‖ *Shall come.* The word *will* would be more suitable here, as the Saviour intended merely to declare the *certainty* that he would have a company of sincere followers. ‖ *Him that cometh to me;* him that applies to me for spiritual blessings. The expression signifies such an applying to Christ as results from a deep feeling of need, and from a conviction that Christ, and Christ only, can bestow the needed blessings; it also implies a cheerful submission to him. *Coming to Christ*, then, means *true faith in him, and obedience to him* as our Saviour and Lord. ‖ *In no wise;* by no means. The word *wise* was formerly used somewhat like our word *way*. See on Matt. 1: 18. ‖ *Cast out;* reject from the glory and bliss of my kingdom. He shall be admitted. Compare Matt. 8: 12.

38, 39. *For I came, &c.* Between the Father and the Son there is no disagreement; the Son acts in perfect accordance with the Father's purposes, and therefore will welcome every one that comes to him. ‖ *I should lose nothing;* should permit to perish, and should myself be deprived of, no one belonging to the company given to me. ‖ *Raise it up again;* to a happy state, this being the contrast of *losing any one*. The disciple of Christ must indeed die in this world; but the Saviour will raise him up to an immortal life. Thus neither natural nor spiritual death shall have permanent dominion over the believer.

40. *Seeth the Son;* receives knowledge concerning him.

and I will raise him up at the last day.

41 The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.

42 And they said, Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?

43 Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.

45 It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me.

46 Not that any man hath

44. *No man can come to me.* The expression *come to me* means *become my disciple.* The word *can* here relates to the *moral disposition* of men. Their disposition not being in accordance with the demand which Christ makes, they cannot, while they continue thus averse to him, become his disciples. True obedience to Christ proceeds from love to him; a mere external obedience he does not seek. ‖ *Draw him;* lead him; so influence his disposition that he will have new feelings in respect to Christ, and will submit to him. This *drawing*, as it is explained in the next verse, is a divine influence on a person's soul, connected with his being taught the truths of God. It is *God's teaching;* it is his presenting to a person divine truth, and making the teaching effectual. This influence of God on the soul of man is necessary in consequence both of men's ignorance and of their perversity towards God; and it consists in removing both. A person who has been drawn to Christ by the Father is one who has been taught divine truth, and whose feelings and purposes in respect to Christ have been changed; so that he regards the Saviour with love, with reliance and obedience. He has been renewed in the spirit of his mind. In this drawing, no violence is done to the mental or the moral powers of a man; but the influence of God is harmonious with both, and renews the heart in such a manner that the person is conscious of no interruption of his own free choice and action. While, however, the person may not be able to distinguish between the operation of God on his soul and other favorable influences, yet the Scripture leads us to ascribe this spiritual change to the effectual teaching and influence of God. Compare 2 Cor. 4: 6. Since, now, such an influence from God is necessary in order to induce men to become followers of Christ, the Saviour sought to check the murmuring of the Jews by intimating to them, that they were too earthly-minded rightly to apprehend and to receive his instructions; that they did not properly receive his instructions, because they had not a pious state of mind, such as God's influence produces. Had they possessed such a state of mind, they would have received him.

45. Jesus sustained his remark by a reference to their own Scriptures, and thus showed that a divine influence was needed by his hearers. *In the prophets.* The word *prophets* is here equivalent to *prophetical writings.* The particular passage alluded to by our Saviour, is Is. 54: 13. ‖ *Every man that hath heard, &c.* The teaching of the Father is effectual. He convinces and gently sways the soul, so that the person becomes with all his heart a disciple of Christ.

46. *Not that any man hath seen the Father, &c.* The Saviour carefully guarded his language against abuse. He did not mean to intimate that any man has ever seen God, and had a

seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.

47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

48 I am that bread of life.

49 Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead.

50 This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.

51 I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us *his* flesh to eat?

53 Then Jesus said unto

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personal acquaintance with him, as a pupil sees his human teacher. A personal knowledge of the Father, and such a perfect acquaintance with his will as would result from personal knowledge, belonged to no one except the Messiah, who proceeded from God, and "was with God," and who therefore could communicate to men all necessary information respecting the divine will. Compare 1 : 18, 2.

47. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, &c.* At v. 36, Jesus commenced a digression from the main topic of discourse, in order distinctly to show the Jews wherein consisted the difficulty which hindered them from acceding to his claims. He now resumes the original topic, and asserts, as he had at v. 35, that he was eminently the author of spiritual and eternal blessings.

48. *That bread;* more properly, *the bread.* See v. 35.

50. *And not die;* and have eternal life. The blessings which Jesus could bestow would endure forever.

51. *I am the living bread;* the bread which sustains life—not the mortal life, but the immortal. That is, I bestow immortal bliss. ‖ *If any man eat of this bread;* if a man rely on me for bliss. ‖ *My flesh;* my own person, I myself. ‖ *I will give;* that is, give up, surrender. ‖ *The life of the world;* the salvation, the eternal life of men.

The Saviour thus endeavored to draw the attention of his hearers to himself as *the source of spiritual blessings*, and not merely as a teacher. He spoke of himself as one wholly distinguished from all others, both as possessing, and doing, that which would most signally benefit the world in regard to spiritual good. To what precisely the Saviour referred, *we* know by the events that have since occurred; namely, to his death on the cross, which procured life, pardon, and eternal bliss for believers of every nation and through all time. His immediate hearers, however, did not fully understand what he meant. Nor did he suppose they would; but his object would be gained, if he should arouse them to reflection, and lodge such thoughts in their minds as would prepare them, after he should have suffered death, for a more full exhibition of his great doctrines.

52. *How can this man give us his flesh to eat?* The Saviour had used the words *bread* and *eat* in a figurative sense; meaning to convey the idea, that as bread nourishes the body, so *he* could impart spiritual nourishment to the soul; and that as the sensation of hunger leads a person to eat food in order to be satisfied, so a longing for *true, spiritual bliss* could be satisfied only by confiding in him, and receiving his blessings. But the Jews overlooked the figurative nature of the language, when he spoke of his *flesh* as imparting life. Hence arose their inquiry.

53. *Then Jesus said.* The Saviour did not reply to their inquiry. He repeated in similar, though stronger

them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

54 Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.

55 For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

56 He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him.

57 As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

58 This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever.

59 These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum.

60 Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard *this*,

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terms, the sentiment which he had already expressed. His design was, to fix deeply in their minds the thought that men's spiritual welfare must be derived from him, as the one whose death was to be the distinguished means of procuring for them pardon and eternal life. It was to himself, then, as *a suffering, dying Saviour*, that he wished to draw their attention; and to an implicit reliance on him, in the character of *a dying Saviour*, as the author of real, abiding bliss to their souls. Hence he spoke not only of his flesh, but also of his *blood*. || *Ye have no life in you;* ye have not spiritual, eternal life; your souls are dead in trespasses and sins, destitute of real, everlasting bliss. Eternal life must be bestowed by the Saviour, the Lamb of God; and it pertains to those only who trust in him as his disciples.

54. *Whoso eateth my flesh, &c.* As the bodily life is dependent on food and drink, so a healthful, happy state of the soul depends on receiving Christ and trusting in him.

55. *My flesh is meat indeed; my blood is drink indeed;* sustaining the soul and nourishing it for endless bliss; food indeed, as contrasted both with the manna which sustained the Israelites in the desert, and with the ordinary food of men.

56. *Dwelleth in me.* The Saviour then mentioned a reason why trusting in him would secure eternal life; namely, between him and every believer there exists a most intimate union, *he dwelling in the believer*, that is, constantly imparting blessings, and guiding him by spiritual influence; and *the believer dwelling in Christ*, that is, receiving spiritual good from him. This intimate union of Christ with the believer, and of the believer with Christ, in mutual affection and interest — this superintendence of Christ and dependence of the believer — secures the believer's eternal life.

57. *The living Father;* the Father who "hath life in himself" (5 : 26), that is, who is the source of all life. || *I live by the Father;* I also have life in myself (5 : 26), by the Father's arrangement. || *He that eateth me;* he that relies on me for spiritual life. See vs. 53, 54. || *Shall live by me;* shall enjoy eternal life by means of me.

The possession of eternal life, by the believer in Christ, is here placed on an immovable foundation. The Father, who has life in himself as its great source, has appointed the Son to be the Saviour, and has ordained that, in the capacity of a Saviour, *he too* should have life in himself. As certainly as this arrangement on the part of the life-giving Father secures a life-giving power to the Son, so certainly will every believer in the Son receive eternal life through him.

60. *His disciples.* This word is here used in a large sense, meaning

said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it?

61 When Jesus knew in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said unto them, Doth this offend you?

62 *What* and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?

63 It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life.

64 But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him.

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

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the persons who had lately attended on the instructions of Jesus, though their hearts had not become attached to him. ‖ *A hard saying;* an address hard to be understood and believed. They referred to his speaking of having come down from heaven, of his being the bread of life, of the necessity of feeding on him in order to enjoy eternal life, and of the need of God's influence to turn their hearts to him. ‖ *Who can hear it?* who can comprehend and receive such an address?

61. *Offend you?* prove a stumbling-block, induce you to forsake me? See on Matt. 5: 29. 13: 21.

62. *What and if ye shall see,* &c. If my declaration, that I came down from heaven, seems to you a hard saying, what will ye think hereafter, should ye see the Messiah ascending, &c. ‖ *Up where he was before?* to heaven, where he dwelt before he appeared among men. Compare 1: 1, 18. 3: 13 17: 5.

63. The people were unable also to see the propriety of his calling himself the bread of life on which a man must feed, and of his declaring it necessary to eat his flesh and to drink his blood, in order to have eternal life. They did not comprehend his meaning; but were ready to reject his instructions as unintelligible and absurd. He cautioned them against thus regarding his instructions, and declared that they were indispensable to the true life of the soul. *It is the Spirit that quickeneth;* it is the soul, the animating principle, that maketh alive. ‖ *The flesh profiteth nothing;* the body, considered by itself and alone, is of no avail in respect to life and true enjoyment. ‖ *They are spirit, and they are life;* my instructions are an animating principle to the soul; they are the means of spiritual, eternal bliss. The idea conveyed by the whole verse, may be thus expressed: The spirit, the animating principle, is necessary to give life to the body; without it, the body has no power. So my instructions are an animating principle to the soul, and are the means of its enjoying eternal life; without my instructions, the soul will be destitute of spiritual, eternal bliss, just as without the spirit the flesh is lifeless and powerless. Thus the Saviour declared the necessity and the efficacy of the truths which he had communicated, and cautioned the people against rejecting them.

64. *From the beginning;* that is, of his public entrance on his office.

65. *Therefore said I unto you,* &c. See v. 44. Jesus was so well acquainted with the character of man, and so thoroughly read the hearts of those who professed belief in him, that he knew how necessary was a special divine influence to a just apprehension of his teaching, and to right feelings towards him. Hence too, he knew that of those to whom he had now been speaking, there were some who would not receive him as the Messiah.

66 From that *time* many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

67 Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

68 Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.

69 And we believe, and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

70 Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

71 He spake of Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon: for he it was that should betray him, being one of the twelve.

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66. *Disciples.* See on v. 60.

68. *Words of eternal life;* instructions which guide to eternal bliss.

69. *That Christ;* the Messiah.

70. *Chosen;* selected to be my apostles, and to enjoy a more intimate acquaintance with me. ‖ *A devil.* The disposition of Satan, as the adversary of Christ, might well be said to have been possessed by Judas. The word, however, here used in the original, may have been employed in the general sense of *adversary*, without fastening on Judas the appellation *devil.* When the original word properly means *Devil*, it has the article connected with it, thus; *The Devil.* There being no article here used in the original, the Saviour probably intended merely to declare that one of the little company would act the part of an insidious *enemy.*

71. *Judas Iscariot.* See on Matt. 10: 4. ‖ *That should betray him;* that was going to betray him, though he was one of the twelve.

Topics for Reflection. 1. Spiritual and everlasting blessings are chiefly worthy of our pursuit. v. 27.

2. Spiritual blessings can be secured only by believing in Jesus Christ and becoming his disciples. vs. 29, 35.

3. True faith in Christ has respect to him as the giver of spiritual good, and as blessing the world through his sufferings and death. vs. 48, 53.

4. True faith in Christ is a real reliance on him for blessings, which arises from a feeling of our necessities. Such a feeling of need must exist before a person will trust in Christ; and a feeling of need can be satisfied only by a sincere application to him, and a reception of his blessings; just as hunger must be *felt*, in order that food may be sought; and the food must be *received* in order to satisfy hunger. v. 51.

5. If we are sensible of our spiritual necessities, there is great encouragement to trust in Christ. God has appointed that many shall receive the Saviour's blessings; hence every one, who feels his need, is encouraged to apply to the Saviour. Whoever, of any nation or condition, of any age or circumstances, however deep his sense of ill-desert, *whoever* is inclined to come to Christ, is assured of a welcome reception. v. 37.

6. Such is the natural disposition of men towards God, that without a special, divine influence inclining them to come to the Saviour, they will not come. Are *we* sensible of our utter sinfulness, and of our liability to destroy our souls by refusing to come to Christ? Let us, then, not trust to our own hearts. How condescending is God, not only in providing a Saviour, but also in drawing men to him! O, let us beware of resisting and grieving the Spirit. On the contrary, let us be solicitous to be so taught of God, that we shall receive the Saviour and trust in him. v. 44.

7. If the doctrines of the Bible appear to us difficult of comprehension, and repulsive, let us seek for more enlightening influence, for higher and more spiritual views. A ray of light may strike on our minds, and scatter all our darkness. Obscure as some

CHAPTER VII.

AFTER these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

2 Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

3 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples

parts of divine truth may appear to us, yet let us rely on Christ as the infallible Teacher and the safe Guide to heaven.

8. A true disciple will continue in his attachment to the Saviour. vs. 66—69.

9. How awful the guilt of rejecting the Saviour after having received abundant knowledge respecting him! vs. 70, 71.

CHAPTER VII.

1. *Jesus walked;* went about, dwelt. ‖ *Jewry;* Judea. ‖ *Because the Jews sought to kill him.* Galilee, as well as Judea, was inhabited by Jews; but the principal men of the nation lived in Judea, and Jerusalem, in Judea, was the seat of the Jewish power. There was consequently much more opposition to Jesus in Judea, than in the other parts of the country.

2. *The Jews' feast of tabernacles;* one of their annual festivals. There were three great annual festivals (see Deut. 16: 16); the passover, or festival of unleavened bread (Deut. 16: 1—8. Ex. 12: 14—17, 27), the pentecost, or festival of weeks (Deut. 16: 9—12), and the festival of tabernacles (Deut. 16: 13—15). This last received its name from the manner in which it was celebrated. The people erected booths of green branches and leaves, both on their houses and in the courts and streets in which they dwelt during the continuance of the festival. They also carried about fruits of choice trees, and branches of palms, willows, and other trees. It was intended as a memorial of the Israelites' journeying through the desert from Egypt to Canaan, during which they dwelt in booths. See Lev. 23: 40—43. It was also intended as a season of thanksgiving for the harvest, and was therefore called the festival of *ingathering*. See Lev. 23: 39. Deut. 16: 13—15. Ex. 23: 16. 34: 22. It commenced on the fifteenth of the month Tisri, corresponding to our October (Lev. 23: 34, 39), and was held eight days; the first and the last of which were days of special solemnity. See Lev. 23: 35, 36. It was a time of much joy, and of the public reading of the law. See Deut. 31: 10—13. Compare Neh. 8: 14—18. It was called, by Jewish writers, the *greatest festival;* and it was commonly said, that if a person was not acquainted with this festival, he did not know what joy was. Besides the ceremonies prescribed by Moses, the later Jews say there was added the ceremony of drawing water, every morning during the festival, from the fountain Siloam, in a golden vessel, and, after conveying it with much solemnity to the temple, the priests poured it out on the altar, while the Levites were engaged in singing. Another ceremony was added, in order to celebrate the conquest of Jericho by Joshua. Every day of the festival, the Jews, holding branches in their hands, would pass around the altar, shouting Hosanna. On the seventh day, they would go around it seven times in the same manner.

3. *That thy disciples also may see,* &c. The word *disciples* is here used in the same extensive sense as in 6: 60, 66. The near relatives of Jesus, knowing that he had attracted much attention in Judea, thought it would be wise in him to confirm the good opinion which many there had formed. They did not correctly judge respecting Jesus, nor rightly estimate his proceedings; they were actuated by worldly views. Though they did not believe in him as the Messiah (see v. 5), yet they knew he was an uncommon man, and they would rejoice, should their expectations of a great Deliverer be realized in him

also may see the works that thou doest.

4 For *there is* no man *that* doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world.

5 (For neither did his brethren believe in him.)

6 Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready.

7 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

8 Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.

9 When he had said these words unto them, he abode *still* in Galilee.

10 But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

11 Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

12 And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

13 Howbeit, no man spake openly of him, for fear of the Jews.

14 Now, about the midst of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple and taught.

15 And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

Should he be generally acknowledged, in the sense of the term then cherished, the king of the Jews, they would probably have coincided with the current opinion, and have felt a pride in being his relatives.

4. *If thou do these things.* The word *if* does not here express doubt, for his brethren had just acknowledged (v. 3) that he had performed wonderful works. It is equivalent to our word *since.* ‖ *To the world;* publicly. Judea was the more important part of Palestine; and the festival, which was now at hand, would draw visitors to Jerusalem from all quarters. Galilee was comparatively an obscure region, where, as they might say, he was burying himself from public notice.

6. *My time is not yet come;* a suitable time for me to be going up to the festival. ‖ *Your time is always ready;* any time is suitable for you. There are no special reasons in respect to you for preferring one time before another.

7. *The world cannot hate you.* The immediate relatives of Jesus were not so different from other men in religious respects, as to be exposed to their ill-will. Nor did they, like Jesus, sustain any public relation to men which required them to reprove the sins of the world.

8. *My time.* See on v. 6.

10. *Not openly, but as it were in secret.* It was customary among the Jews to visit Jerusalem at the great festivals in companies. Jesus chose to go on this occasion alone, in a retired manner; and perhaps not on the most public roads. He wished neither to create excitement among the populace, who were ready to proclaim him as a king, nor needlessly to provoke the hostility of the chief men.

12. *Murmuring;* not complaining, but conversing, or disputing, in a private manner, so as not to be detected by the rulers.

13. *For fear of the Jews;* of the chief men among the Jews.

15. *How knoweth this man letters?*

16 Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

17 If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

18 He that speaketh of himself, seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

19 Did not Moses give you

The word rendered *letters* signifies *learning*, or *scriptures*. It here, doubtless, refers to the knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures. The Jews cultivated no other learning; and the Saviour had probably been explaining some portions of the Old Testament. See the preceding verse. Compare Luke 4: 16. ‖ *Having never learned.* Jesus had not been taught by the doctors of the law, nor gone through their usual course of training. The question in this verse was asked, not so much to express admiration at the Saviour's teaching, as to create doubts in the minds of the common people, and to hinder them from receiving his doctrines.

16. *Jesus answered them, &c.* Jesus saw the design of the inquiry, and proceeded to show whence his doctrine originated, and to present proofs that it was the truth, derived from God. ‖ *My doctrine;* my instruction, the sentiments which I deliver. ‖ *Is not mine, &c.*; is not to be regarded mine, so much as God's, by whose authority I act. My instructions were not devised by myself, irrespectively of the Father; but are the instructions which he himself approves and sanctions. Jesus thus met the objection which was couched in the inquiry of the preceding verse. The leading Jews knew that he had not been instructed in the Scriptures by their teachers. Jesus declared, that his doctrine descended from heaven.

17, 18. In these two verses, our Lord presented two reasons in confirmation of his professing to teach only what was agreeable to God's will. The first reason is, that his doctrine itself is such as commends itself to a pious mind; and every one whose heart is right in the sight of God, will *feel* that the doctrine is true. *If any man will do his will;* if any one is disposed to obey the will of God; that is, is truly pious. To such a person the doctrine of Christ commends itself as a source of light and spiritual strength, so fitted to the wants of men, that the author of the doctrine is perceived to be the author of the human soul. ‖ *Of myself;* by my own suggestion and authority, apart from God.

Reflection. What a recommendation is this of the gospel! and how strong a proof of its truth! Of what human system of morals and religion can our Saviour's remark be made? Between the doctrines of Christianity and the nature of man there is entire harmony. His highest necessities here find an ample supply; his highest desires, full gratification. And all the gratification which Christianity imparts, tends to the elevation of the soul in true worth.

18. Another argument for the truth of his doctrine Jesus adduced from his own manner of proceeding; namely, his not seeking honor for himself, but for the Father who had sent him. Here was a proof of sincerity and probity. *He that speaketh of himself;* that is, by his own authority, not being sent from God. ‖ *Is true;* upright and worthy of confidence. ‖ *Unrighteousness;* deception. Jesus did not seek honor for himself, but for God. All his actions showed a supreme regard for the divine glory. Hence, confidence ought to be placed in his instructions.

19. *Did not Moses give you the law?* Jesus had declared, that a truly

the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

20 The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

21 Jesus answered and said

pious state of mind could judge correctly respecting his doctrine. He now brings distinctly to view the irreligious spirit of the Jews, as disqualifying them to pass a righteous judgment. Though they professed to reverence the law of Moses, yet they were indulging a temper of mind towards Jesus utterly at variance with the law. Jesus knew that they were cherishing desires for his death; and they pretended that he was a violator of the Sabbath, because he had healed on that day. This accusation Jesus showed to be a most unreasonable one, even when examined by their own practices. Thus they had no just ground for seeking his death. Their desire arose from hatred to him. In respect to the accusation of his having violated the Sabbath, there were various kinds of labor, and particularly the performance of circumcision and the healing connected with it, to which they thought it proper to attend on the Sabbath. If there was no wrong in attending on that day to circumcision and to the healing which then became necessary, how could there be wrong in Jesus' miraculously healing a sick man on that day? Why should they seek to put Jesus to death for healing on the Sabbath, while they felt themselves justified in performing cures on the Sabbath?

Another view of the connection may be presented. The endeavors of the Jews to effect the death of Jesus indicated in them a spirit hostile to the precepts of Moses. For Moses had inculcated the love of one's neighbor; yet they manifested a spirit towards Jesus utterly at variance with that injunction, in their seeking to put him to death. And therefore, if they would accuse Jesus of having disregarded the law of Moses in respect to the Sabbath, he could bring a far more weighty and a perfectly just charge against them of disregard to their legislator. ‖ *None of you keepeth the law;* neither according to its letter, nor according to its spirit. Because, though the law enjoined that no work should be done on the Sabbath, yet circumcision was performed on the Sabbath, and the healing applications were attended to. The spirit also which they cherished towards Jesus was a gross violation of the law of Moses. ‖ *Why go ye about?* why do ye make endeavors?

20. *The people answered;* not the persons to whom Jesus directed the preceding remarks, but the common people, the multitude, as distinguished from the principal men. ‖ *Thou hast a devil.* As those who were said to be possessed by a demon were, in most instances, deranged persons, the idea here expressed was, that Jesus was beside himself. Compare 10: 20. Of course, the language was highly reproachful. Compare, also, 8: 48. ‖ *Who goeth about to kill thee?* The common people spoke sincerely. *They*, having, many of them, come from other parts of the land, had not sought the life of Jesus, and they were probably not yet acquainted with the designs of the principal men.

21. *Jesus answered.* He paid no attention to the reproachful language of the crowd, nor corrected their mistake in respect to the feelings which had been cherished towards him. He continued his remarks to those with whom he had been speaking, not noticing this interruption; and vindicated himself against their charge that he had violated the Sabbath. ‖ *One work;* the cure of the man at Bethesda. See 5: 8. ‖ *Marvel;* are surprised at it, as though it was highly wrong, because it was done on the Sabbath.

unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

22 Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision, (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the Sabbath-day circumcise a man.

23 If a man on the Sabbath-day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the Sabbath-day?

24 Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he whom they seek to kill?

26 But lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

27 Howbeit, we know this man, whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is.

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22. *Therefore.* This word should stand in the preceding verse, as having reference to the work there alluded to; so that the last clause of that verse would be as follows: — "and ye all therefore [on account of it] marvel." In the original, the words so stand as to warrant this view; and the connection requires it. || *Gave unto you;* enjoined on you. || *Not because,* &c. The word translated *because* would here be more properly translated *that.* The idea of the Saviour in this clause was, "I do not mean to say that it originated with Moses; it came from the patriarchs, particularly Abraham." See Gen. 17: 10. The Jews were in the habit of referring all their religious customs to Moses. In accordance with the current mode of speaking, Jesus had said, "Moses enjoined on you circumcision." He then added, "not that it came from Moses; it came from the fathers of the nation." || *A man.* The word thus rendered is applicable to *a child* as well as to *a man,* meaning *a human being.* See 16: 21.

23. *That the law of Moses;* that is, the law respecting circumcision, which required that this ceremony should be performed on the eighth day after the birth of the child. || *Every whit;* entirely. || *Whole;* healed. For a view of the argument contained in this verse, see on v. 19.

24. *Judge righteous judgment;* make a just decision, according to right principles. In attending to circumcision on the Sabbath, the Jews furnished an *appearance,* an *outward* show, of regard to the law which required this ceremony on the eighth day; and they *professed* that the law of circumcision was superior to the law of the Sabbath, and might therefore set it aside. Now, a righteous examination of the matter would have brought them to the conclusion that there might be other duties, besides circumcision, which would be lawful on the Sabbath, if occasion required. Among these might certainly be placed the duties of mercy and benevolence. And if they should make a candid comparison between the bustle that had become connected with circumcision, and the instance of *healing* which Jesus had performed, they could not fail to see that the advantage, so far as reverence for the Sabbath was concerned, was altogether in his favor. Compare Matthew 12: 1—8.

26. *The rulers;* members of the Sanhedrim and other distinguished men among the Jews.

27. *Whence he is;* that is, as to parentage and as to the place of his origin. See verse 41; also, 6: 42. || *Christ;* the Messiah. || *No man knoweth whence he is.* While many of the Jews believed that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, of the

28 Then cried Jesus in the temple, as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

29 But I know him; for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

30 Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

31 And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this *man* hath done?

32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him: and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

33 Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and *then* I go unto him that sent me.

34 Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me:* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come.

35 Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

family of David (see v. 42, and Matt. 2: 5), others supposed that he would suddenly appear, and that no one would be able to give an account of his origin. This latter opinion seems to have been held by some who were at this time in the crowd. There is reason, also, to believe, that some of the Jews expected that the Messiah would retire, for a considerable time, from the notice of men, and then suddenly make his appearance without any one's knowing whence he proceeded. On various points there was, doubtless, among the Jews, a vague, unsettled state of opinion.

28. *Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am.* Referring to their own remark, Jesus acknowledged that he was not a stranger among them; that they did indeed know his person, and his origin (see 6: 42), and the place of his early residence (see v. 41). ‖ *And.* The original word may here be rendered *yet*, or *but.* Though they knew his human origin and residence, *yet* he had actually come forth by divine authority; and He, by whose authority he had come, was indeed *true*, worthy of confidence; and therefore the testimonies which sustained the claims of Jesus ought to have been received. ‖ *Whom ye know not;* with whose real character and designs in sending me you are not acquainted.

29. *But I know him;* I have an intimate acquaintance with him, as to his character and his designs.

30. *His hour;* the precise time when Jesus should be delivered up to his adversaries.

31. *Believed on him;* expressed a conviction that he was the Messiah. Their conviction, however, needed to be confirmed; and in many instances it was destitute of that true love to Jesus which would admit, in all its fulness, his claim to their obedience.

32. *Murmured.* See on v. 12. ‖ *To take him;* to watch an opportunity when they might seize him without exciting the multitude.

33. *Unto them;* to the same company with whom he had been conversing, not particularly to the officers who had been sent to apprehend him. Those officers, doubtless, heard his remarks, and he had reference to them as well as to others.

34. *Ye shall seek me;* the time is coming when you will long for the Messiah, but in vain.

35. *The dispersed among the Gentiles.* Those Jews who did not live in Palestine, but among the Gentiles, were called *the dispersion*, or *the dispersed ones*, that is, those who were

36 What *manner of* saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me:* and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come?

37 In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink.

38 He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

39 (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive, for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given,* because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

40 Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

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scattered abroad. Compare James 1: 1. 1 Peter 1: 1. Of such Jews there were many, particularly in Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor.

37. *That great day of the feast.* The closing day of this festival was also the last of the annual festivals. What ceremonies distinguished this day, and made it a day of greater pomp than the preceding, is not known. Probably, however, the ceremony of drawing water from the fountain Siloam, and carrying it in procession to the altar, was repeated with peculiar solemnity. It was this ceremony, apparently, which suggested to Jesus the language contained in this verse and the next. ‖ *If any man thirst;* if a man feel that he is destitute of true happiness, and if he earnestly desire it, as one who has the feeling of natural thirst and longs for water. ‖ *And drink;* receive a supply for his wants. The idea which the Saviour wished to impress was, that true bliss could be derived from him, and only from him. Compare 6: 55—58.

38. *Out of his belly.* It was usual, among the sacred writers, to mention *a part of the human body* for the whole person. The meaning of the expression here used is simply this, *from him.* ‖ *Rivers;* streams. The word in the original is applicable to smaller streams as well as to large rivers. ‖ *Living water;* ever-flowing water, which would furnish continual refreshment. The idea of the Saviour in this figurative language was, that every person who should truly believe in him would have in himself a fountain of lasting bliss; he would possess real and everlasting happiness. Or, to speak figuratively, there would be in him a well-spring of lasting bliss, from which spring would *flow forth* refreshing streams, making him ever happy. The figure is nearly the same as that which occurs in Is. 58: 11, where a good man is likened to a well-watered garden and to a spring of water — emblems of a flourishing, happy condition. The bliss which Jesus would give, is represented as continual, arising from a perennial spring, and enduring forever. Compare 4: 14. This happy condition, Jesus remarked, would be in accordance with what *the Scripture hath said.* He here referred to the general testimony of the Scripture, rather than to any particular declaration, that the followers of the Messiah would be truly happy.

39. *Not yet given;* that is, comparatively; not in such copious measures as after the ascension of Jesus. ‖ *Glorified;* exalted from a suffering condition to the glorious state in which he was, as head over all things to the church, to send forth the influence of the Spirit. See Ps. 110: 1. John 14: 16. 16: 7—15. Acts 2: 4. Eph. 1: 20—23. 4: 8.

40. *The Prophet.* The Jews were expecting that some one of the ancient prophets would make his appearance at the time of the Messiah, to introduce him and to assist him.

41 Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

42 Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

43 So there was a division among the people because of him.

44 And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

45 Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

48 Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him?

49 But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

50 Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

51 Doth our law judge *any* man before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

52 They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Gali-

See on 1 : 21. Some of the multitude, at this time around the Saviour, though they did not feel prepared to receive him as the Messiah, saw that he was no common man; and began to think that he was at least *the prophet* whom they were expecting.

41. *Out of Galilee?* See on 1 : 45, 46.

42. *Hath not the Scripture said, &c.* See on Matt. 1 : 1. 2 : 5, 6.

44. *Some of them;* some who were devoted to the interests of the Pharisees.

45. *The officers.* See v. 32.

46. *Never man spake like this man.* What an acknowledgment! proceeding, too, from men who were influenced by a hostile spirit, who were watching every word and every look. Every succeeding generation has confirmed the propriety of their remark. To Jesus, then, as our great Teacher and Redeemer, let us heartily submit ourselves.

48. *Have any of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed, &c.* This question was asked, not to procure information whether any of the principal men had acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah; but it was asked, as containing a satisfactory reason why those officers should not allow themselves to be influenced in his favor. None of the distinguished men, none of the acknowledged teachers, had acknowledged him; and if he were the Messiah, *they* would, in all probability (such is the intimation given by the Pharisees to these officers), *they* would perceive the evidence, and admit him to be the Messiah.

49. *But this people;* this multitude, or rabble, as distinguished from the men of weight and influence. ‖ *Are cursed;* are doomed to error and deception. This was a profane expression of contempt for the common people; they were called an *ignorant* and *cursed* multitude. Such a multitude, the Pharisees intimated, might very naturally be deluded, and no regard should be paid to them. Regard ought to be paid rather to the rulers and the Pharisees!

50. *Nicodemus.* See 3 : 1, 2. ‖ *One of them;* a member of the Sanhedrim.

51. *Judge;* condemn. The chief men had, by their manner of speaking, denounced Jesus as a deceiver. ‖ *Before it hear him, &c.* See Deut. 19 : 15—18. Lev. 19 : 15, 16.

52. *Art thou also of Galilee?* art

lee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

53 And every man went unto his own house.

CHAPTER VIII.

JESUS went unto the mount of Olives:

2 And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down and taught them.

3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery: and when they had set her in the midst,

4 They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act.

5 Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou?

6 This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped

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thou, too, a Galilean, and a favorer of this Galilean? — an expression of very bitter reproach. They hated Jesus, and employed to his injury the circumstance of his having resided so much in Galilee. The candid and honorable suggestion of Nicodemus they endeavored to parry, by throwing out a suspicion, that he was weak enough to unite his fortunes with those of this Galilean pretender to the Messiahship! ‖ *Out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.* They here told a palpable falsehood, under the influence of excited malignity against Jesus, and of suspicion in respect to Nicodemus. Prophets had arisen from Galilee. Jonah (2 Kings 14: 25), Nahum (Nah. 1: 1), Elijah, Elisha, and Hosea, originated in that part of the land. But the Pharisees spoke in a hasty, angry manner; and we need not endeavor to reconcile their declaration with historical truth. They might, however, possibly have meant, as is suggested by some writers, that there was not to be expected from *Galilee* any prophet who would be intimately connected with *the Messiah.* Their unreasonable excitement is also obvious in their assuming that Nicodemus viewed him as a prophet, though he had pronounced no such opinion. He had merely stated what was the dictate of their law and of justice; and the principle which he had stated, would apply to the case of the most abandoned criminal as well as to that of Jesus. They very naturally, however, regarded Nicodemus as in heart dissenting from them.

CHAPTER VIII.

1. *Unto the mount of Olives.* Those with whom Jesus had been conversing, and the members of the Sanhedrim, according to the last verse of the preceding chapter, retired to their homes. But Jesus left the city, and went to the mount of Olives. This first verse might have been placed as the last clause of the preceding chapter. Jesus was in the habit of repairing to the village of Bethany, at the foot of the mount. Compare Matt. 21: 17. Luke 21: 37. Perhaps, however, he retired to some cave in the mount.

2. *He sat down.* See on Matt. 5: 1.

4. *Master*; literally, *Teacher.*

5. *Moses in the law commanded,* &c. See Lev. 20: 10. ‖ *Stoned.* Putting to death by stoning was authorized by the laws of Moses; and this mode of putting to death is meant when the particular mode was not specified in the law. See Deut. 13: 10. Josh. 7: 25.

6. *Tempting him, that they might have to accuse him.* Their design was altogether insidious. They were not anxious for the honor of the law, nor for the virtue of the people; they wished to bring Jesus into difficulty. Should he judge the case now presented, and in an official manner condemn the woman to death, they would be able to accuse him of assuming

down, and with *his* finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not.*

7 So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her.

8 And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.

9 And they which heard *it*, being convicted by *their own* conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, *even* unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst.

10 When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee?

11 She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Nei-

power which did not belong to him, but which belonged to the existing authorities of the nation. Should he speak differently from the law of Moses, as they had known him to speak on other subjects differently from *their view* of Moses' laws, a popular tumult might be raised against him as an opposer of Moses, and thus his death might be secured. ‖ *Wrote on the ground;* marked on the ground, perhaps, without writing any words. He appeared not to mind them; and he wished to show that he would not be drawn into useless disputes. By this means, he also drew away the attention of the people from the woman to himself, and prepared them for the very appropriate and solemn remark which he was about to make. The circumstance occurred in one of the courts of the temple, so that he could easily write on the ground.

7. *He that is without sin among you,* &c. This remark might have been made either in respect to sin in general, or, as is more probable, to that class of sins respecting which they had accused the woman. Such sins were very common among the Jews at that time. By this remark, Jesus clearly showed his disapprobation of the sin, and did not weaken the authority of Moses' law, while, at the same time, he gave a needed rebuke to those who had so officiously and hypocritically interfered. ‖ *Cast the first stone.* Compare Deut. 13: 9. 17: 7.

9. *Eldest — last.* These words have reference here to the standing in society which the persons present respectively held. From the most honorable down to those of an inferior rank, they all retired.

10. *Hath no man condemned thee?* That is, Has no man in a legal manner, according to the prescribed forms of proceeding, condemned thee? Hast thou been carried before the proper judges and been condemned?

11. *Neither do I condemn thee;* that is, as a civil judge, as one whose office requires him to try cases and decide on them by the law of the land, and condemn to the prescribed punishment. Violations of the laws were to be tried before the proper judges. Now, Jesus did not come in a civil capacity, to put in force the laws; hence his office did not require him to pass sentence in this case. He declined all action in respect to it, on the same principle by which he refused to interfere in the case of dividing an inheritance among claimants (see Luke 12: 13, 14). It did not belong to him. It *did* pertain to his office, however, to warn against sin, and to arouse the conscience. Of this he never lost sight. Hence he seriously warned the woman, Go and sin no more.

Reflections. 1. Better it is to be examining our own hearts and rectifying our own conduct, than to be detecting the faults of others. v. 7. Compare Matt. 7: 1—5.

ther do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

13 The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true.

14 Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, *yet* my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go: but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go.

15 Ye judge after the flesh, I judge no man.

16 And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.

17 It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true.

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2. A careful examination of ourselves generally results in producing conviction of our own ill deserts. v. 9.

After the company who had brought the woman to Jesus had retired, the people again collected, and Jesus began to address them.

12. *Unto them;* the people. See v. 2. ‖ *The light of the world.* As the sun imparts light and happiness, so Jesus bestows true knowledge and bliss. He is the Teacher and the Saviour. ‖ *He that followeth me;* submits to my guidance; that is, becomes my disciple. ‖ *Walk in darkness;* live in ignorance and misery. ‖ *The light of life;* the knowledge which relates to eternal life, and the bliss which endures forever.

13. *Thy record is not true;* thy testimony is not worthy of confidence, being a declaration from thyself in thine own behalf.

14. *Yet my record is true.* The case of Jesus was a peculiar one. He had a perfect knowledge respecting himself, and no one else on earth had such knowledge respecting him. Consequently, no other was qualified to bear contradictory testimony. This perfect knowledge rendered his own testimony valid and credible; while the utter ignorance of the Pharisees respecting his heavenly origin and his destination rendered their declarations wholly valueless. The perfect knowledge which Jesus had of his origin and of his destination was also accompanied with perfect integrity. In order for a person to bear testimony, knowledge is requisite; complete knowledge respecting himself Jesus had, and no person on earth, besides, was thus perfectly acquainted with him. His own testimony, then, was not to be set aside.

15. *Judge after the flesh;* according to the external appearance, and with earthly views. Hence they could not judge properly respecting the Messiah, not having a just apprehension of his spiritual office. ‖ *I judge no man;* that is, in the manner in which you judge, *after the flesh*, according to the external appearance. Between the decisions of Jesus, then, and those of the Pharisees, there would necessarily be a wide difference.

16. *And yet if I judge, &c.* Jesus presented another reason, showing that his testimony ought to be received as valid; namely, he was not alone in his testimony, but the Father's testimony was united with his. The Saviour here again met the objection contained in v. 13—"Thou bearest record of thyself." The word *judge* is here equivalent to the phrase "*form a decision*, or *express a judgment*, respecting myself."

17, 18. This union of the Father's testimony with his own, was in ac-

18 I am one that bear witness of myself; and the Father that sent me, beareth witness of me.

19 Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also.

20 These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him, for his hour was not yet come.

21 Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

22 Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come.

23 And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from

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cordance with the requisition in the law of Moses, requiring the testimony of more witnesses than one. *It is written in your law.* See Deut. 17: 6. 19: 15. ‖ *Two men;* two persons. The Mosaic law required at least *two* persons, as witnesses. In the present instance, Jesus came forward claiming to be the Son of God. His testimony concerning himself rested on the perfect knowledge which he had of his having come from heaven, and of his being about to return to heaven (v. 14); while no being could present a contradictory testimony. Besides being himself so well qualified a witness, God, his Father, who was Truth itself, was bearing a corresponding testimony.

19. *Where is thy Father?* They affected either not to understand whom he meant as his Father, or to cast contempt on him as claiming an unwarrantable dignity. They were in a frame of mind exceedingly undevout, and unsuitable for forming a judgment respecting Jesus. And Jesus told them of this. Such was their ignorance of him, as to the object for which he had come, and such was their ignorance of the true character of God, and of his design in sending the Messiah, that they could not judge of him in a correct manner. They needed more knowledge and a better disposition in respect to him and to his Father.

20. *In the treasury.* In one of the apartments of the temple were kept thirteen chests for receiving the voluntary donations and the annual payments of the Jews for the support of the temple. See Mark 12: 41. The name *treasury* is here given to that apartment. ‖ *His hour.* See 7: 30.

21. To another company, probably, and on another occasion, Jesus spoke what next follows. *I go my way,* &c. See 7: 33, 34. ‖ *Shall die in your sins;* shall perish in consequence of your sins. Jesus referred particularly, as he explained in v. 24, to the sin of refusing to become his sincere disciples.

22. *Will he kill himself?* There was probably couched under this inquiry of the Jews the profane intimation, that it was very likely that Jesus would go to the world of misery, to which *they* indeed had no expectation of going! It was commonly believed among the Jews, that those who committed suicide would be condemned to a low place in the pit of woe. See in 7: 35, the manner in which a similar remark of our Lord was treated on another occasion.

23. Without noticing the contemptuous language which had been used, Jesus most solemnly warned the Jews of their sinful condition, and of the doom which awaited them if they persisted in rejecting him. *Ye are from beneath;* ye are earthly, not spiritual, not heavenly in your dispositions and purposes. ‖ *I am from*

above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world.

24 I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am *he*, ye shall die in your sins.

25 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even *the same* that I said unto you from the beginning.

26 I have many things to say, and to judge of you: but he that sent me, is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

27 They understood not that he spake to them of the Father.

28 Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am *he*, and *that* I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.

29 And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

30 As he spake these words, many believed on him.

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed;

32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall *make* you free.

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above; I am from heaven, and my disposition and aims correspond to my origin. For the meaning of the terms *above* and *beneath*, see Col. 3: 2. Jesus immediately repeated the same thought in other words. Thus the Saviour declared that they were destitute of pious, heavenly feelings, and were exposed to be rejected from heaven. Their refusing to enter into his views, and their whole treatment of him, sufficiently showed what spirit they were of.

24. *I am he;* I am the Messiah, whom I profess to be.

25. *From the beginning.* Jesus had, from the commencement of his public ministry, claimed to be the Messiah, the One that was to come from the Father. This claim he still and constantly maintained. The word translated *from the beginning*, is also by some translated *altogether*, *most truly*. The Saviour intended to say most solemnly, and in a tone of strong assurance, "throughout and entirely, I am what I have declared myself to be."

26. *I have many things to say, and to judge*, &c. The idea is, You give me just occasion to say much more respecting you, and to pronounce an unfavorable decision concerning you. ‖ *But*, &c. But notwithstanding your improper treatment of me, I have God's judgment in my favor; and his testimony ought to be regarded by you as valid. ‖ *And I speak to the world*, &c. The truths also which I communicate are precisely such as he gave me to impart.

28. *Shall have lifted up the Son of man.* Jesus here alluded to his expected crucifixion. See 12: 32, 33. Compare, also, 3: 14. ‖ *That I am he;* that I am the Messiah, that it is I who was promised to the nation. The death and resurrection of Jesus were to furnish signal evidence of his being really the Messiah. Compare Matt. 12: 38—40. Rom. 1: 4. ‖ *I do nothing of myself;* that is, by my own authority, distinct from that of the Father.

31. *Continue in my word;* be steadfast in adhering to my doctrine.

32. *Ye shall know the truth*, ye shall have a right discernment of what is true, and you will inwardly *feel* the truth of my doctrines. Compare 7: 17. ‖ *Shall make you free;*

33 They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free?

34 Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin.

35 And the servant abideth not in the house forever, *but* the son abideth ever.

36 If the Son therefore shall

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from the bondage of ignorance, of error, and of sin.

33. *They answered him.* The word *they* does not relate to those who had just declared their conviction that he was the Messiah (v. 30), and on whom he had enjoined a continued attachment to him. It is used in a general manner, as we often use it, equivalent to *the people;* and it refers to some then standing by, who were disposed to cavil at his language || *We be Abraham's seed,* &c. They spurned the thought that they, descendants of Abraham, to whom such promises had been made, should be represented as needing to be *set free,* as though they were in bondage. The nation had indeed been in subjection to the Egyptians and to the Chaldeans, and had been dependent on other powers, and even then were in subjection to the Romans. But their lofty spirit could not bear, that their subjection should be called *bondage,* and that it should be distinctly charged on them. As the Saviour, however, was speaking to a few individuals merely, they probably thought of *personal servitude,* of being *bond slaves to some master,* in the same way that in past ages they had had domestic slaves from among foreigners. The people then present had never been in such bondage. Though the Saviour did not mean such bondage, yet the Jews were disposed to cavil, and to put an unfavorable construction on his words.

34, 35. *Jesus answered,* &c. Jesus proceeded to state distinctly that he spoke of a bondage to sin, and of their being in spiritual bondage. Moreover, though they might boast of belonging to the family of God, they were not in reality his children, and would not be allowed to possess the privileges of children; but, being slaves to sin, they would be cut off from the privileges which they now enjoyed, just as a slave, or a servant, is not entitled to a permanent connection with a family as an own child is, but may, whenever it seems best to the master of the family, be removed to another situation.

35. *And the servant abideth not in the house forever.* A servant has not the right of a permanent connection with the family; his connection is liable to be sundered, and he cannot claim, as his right, a lasting abode in the family — such a lasting abode pertains to children, to those that are *free.* || *The house;* the family. || *Forever;* a general term, indicating an indefinite length of time, *continually, perpetually.* A servant's connection with a family is liable to be only temporary; it is a son, a child, that enjoys the privilege of *permanent* connection. Those Jews, being *servants,* being in *bondage* (that is, to sin), could not justly claim the privileges which pertain only to *children;* and, however they might pride themselves on belonging to the family of God, they would soon be cut off from it, even in respect to external acknowledgment. || *The son;* the son of a family. The Messiah is not here meant by this word. Jesus merely employed an illustration drawn from usages with which the Jews were acquainted.

36. *If the Son, therefore,* &c. The word *Son* here means the Messiah himself. Jesus declared to the Jews that they stood in need of being rescued from bondage, and that they could be rescued only by the Messiah, by himself. Should they receive from

make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

37 I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you.

38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.

40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, *even* God.

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him freedom, their freedom would be indeed worthy of the name; they could obtain true liberty only by becoming his disciples.

37. *Ye are Abraham's seed;* the natural posterity of Abraham. ‖ *But ye seek to kill me, because,* &c. The Saviour here showed that, though they were the natural posterity of Abraham, yet they did not resemble him in *character;* they were not his *spiritual* children; for they cherished a malicious disposition towards Jesus, through dislike of his instructions. ‖ *My word;* my instructions.

38. *With my Father;* that is, God. ‖ *With your father;* that is, Satan. See v. 44. As if Jesus had said, While the instructions which I communicate are in perfect accordance with the will of my Father, you act in accordance with the will of Satan, in disliking and rejecting my instructions. In respect to character, my Father and your father are entirely opposite, just as I and you are entirely opposite. Jesus was thus gradually bringing them to see that he regarded them as exceedingly sinful, and utterly opposed to God, and resembling the evil one.

39. *Abraham is our father.* Mention having been made of *their father,* they at once called to mind *Abraham,* as the father of the nation, of whom they so much boasted. And their claim of him as their father implied the claim of being *like* him, and of being entitled to the divine favor. Thus they sought to avoid the conclusion to which the language of Jesus was conducting them. ‖ *If ye were Abraham's children;* his children, in the truly valuable sense of that expression, his spiritual children, like him in character, and entitled to such blessings as he enjoyed. ‖ *Works of Abraham;* works like Abraham's. Ye would be like him in your conduct.

40. *Ye seek to kill me, a man,* &c.; ye indulge a murderous spirit towards me, who am declaring truth from God.

41. *Deeds of your father;* you manifest a spirit and perform acts like those of your father, the devil. The Jews now saw plainly to what conclusion Jesus was leading them, and they resolutely maintained that they were genuine children of God, that their Father and Abraham's Father was one and the same. ‖ *We be not born of fornication;* we are *genuine* children of God. The terms *adultery* and *fornication* are frequently used in the Bible to signify *apostasy from God,* and *an adopting of idolatry.* The Jews, then, in their reply to Jesus, maintained that they had not apostatized from God, that they were not idolaters, that they had not descended from idolaters, but that, like Abraham, they were *genuine* children of God, not a spurious offspring. ‖ *One Father;* one and the same Father; we have the same Father that Abraham had.

42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.

43 Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word.

44 Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth; because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

45 And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not.

46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

47 He that is of God, hareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.

48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?

49 Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honor my Father, and ye do dishonor me.

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42. *If God were your Father*, &c. Jesus denied that they were true children of God. Their treatment of *him*, though he came from God and by the authority of God, sufficiently proved that their spirit was entirely at variance with God.

43. *My speech;* what I am saying. ‖ *Cannot hear;* cannot hear with approbation; cannot receive. ‖ *My word;* my instructions. The spirit which the Jews were indulging was so entirely hostile to the character and the teaching of Jesus, that they could not approve him.

44. *Lusts;* evil desires. Jesus proceeds to mention two characteristics of the devil, in which the Jews resembled him, and proved themselves to be *his* children, rather than children of God. These two characteristics are, a murderous spirit, and a dislike of the truth. Their desires to put Jesus to death, and their dislike of his doctrines, constituted their resemblance to Satan. ‖ *He was a murderer from the beginning.* It was he who, in the beginning of the human race, tempted our first parent, and thus subjected men to death. ‖ *Abode not in the truth;* departed from the truth, and beguiled Eve by falsehood. See Gen. 3:4. ‖ *There is no truth in him;* no veracity, no love of truth. No dependence can be placed on what he says. ‖ *He speaketh of his own;* he speaketh in accordance with his own nature and character, according to his own heart. ‖ *Father of it;* father of lying.

45. *Because I tell you the truth*, &c. As Satan loves not truth, so ye believe me not, because I declare the truth. Should I declare false religious sentiments, and profess to be the Messiah according to your false views of the character and designs of the Messiah, ye would believe me.

46. *Convinceth me of sin?* The word *sin* refers here particularly to what would be *wrong in respect to the teaching and the claims* of Jesus, and is equivalent to *error* and *deception.* The inquiry which our Lord proposed is, Which of you can *convict* me, can *prove me to have been guilty*, of erroneous and deceptive teaching, or of any departure from truth?

47. *He that is of God;* a child of God. Compare v. 44. ‖ *God's words;* instructions delivered by the authority, and with the approbation, of God.

48. *Thou art a Samaritan.* An expression of bitter reproach. The Samaritans were abhorred by the Jews. Compare 7:20.

50 And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.

51 Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

52 Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death.

53 Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself?

54 Jesus answered, If I honor myself, my honor is nothing: it is my Father that honoreth me, of whom ye say, that he is your God.

55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.

56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw *it*, and was glad.

57 Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?

58 Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.

59 Then took they up stones

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50. *I seek not mine own glory.* Though you greatly dishonor me, yet I am not solicitous about my own glory, nor shall I turn from my appropriate course in order to take vengeance on you. The vindication of my honor I leave to another, to my Father. ‖ *There is one that seeketh;* there is one (my Father) who will seek my glory, and vindicate my honor. ‖ *And judgeth;* that is, judgeth you; who will condemn you, while he vindicates me.

51. *My saying;* my doctrine. ‖ *Never see death;* shall never die, but shall live forever. In this manner, Jesus again solemnly declared himself to be the Saviour, and required faith in him, and obedience to him, in order to the possession of eternal life. See v. 12. 7: 37, 38. Compare 6: 50, 54, 57, 58.

52. *Now we know,* &c. Again the Jews misunderstood, or affected to misunderstand, his language; they applied to natural death what he had spoken concerning spiritual and eternal death.

54. *If I honor myself,* &c. The Jews had just cast reproach on him as one claiming great honor for himself, pretending to be greater than Abraham and the prophets. Jesus tacitly assents that he is far greater than Abraham and the prophets, but yet he remarks that he is not solicitous to vindicate himself from the reproaches of the Jews. The honor which he has, and the vindication which is due to him, proceed not from himself, but from the Father. Compare v. 50.

55. *Ye have not known him;* you have not a just knowledge of *his* character. ‖ *Keep his saying;* adhere to the instructions which he gave me. Compare vs. 28, 38.

56. *Rejoiced to see my day;* rejoiced that he could, by faith in the promises of God, and by a believing anticipation of the future, see and enjoy the time when I should be blessing the world. God had promised to Abraham that, through his posterity, all the families of the earth should be blessed; he believed this promise, and, by anticipation, enjoyed its fulfilment.

58. *Before Abraham was, I am.* Compare 1: 1, 2, 15, 30. 3: 13. 17: 5, 24. Col. 1: 17.

59. *Jesus hid himself.* He turned away from those with whom he had

to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

been engaged in conversation, concealed himself from their sight and power by mingling with the crowd, and thus passed away from the temple.

TOPICS FOR REFLECTION. 1. Persevering obedience to the Saviour is necessary in order to prove ourselves his disciples. A wavering, short-lived obedience is a just ground of fear that the heart has not been renewed. v. 31. Compare Matt. 13: 23. Luke 8: 15.

2. It is only true religion that bestows real liberty of soul — liberty from the dominion of worldly and evil propensities. True religion brings our affections and purposes to a conformity with reason and conscience: thus it regulates the whole character, and delivers its possessor from subjection to any unworthy power. v. 32. How great is the mistake of regarding religion as a species of bondage! As well might it be said that a temperate man is a slave to temperance; as well might the intemperate say that they themselves are freemen, while all the world knows that they are in abject bondage to a vile appetite. Religion is, indeed, a state of subjection — a *voluntary* subjection, however — to the great principles of *right* towards God and man, which principles necessarily lead to present and to eternal happiness. But is not *sin* a state of subjection? subjection of the reason, of all the higher powers of the soul, to what is *wrong*, and to what insures present and eternal woe?

3. Unless we become true *children of God* in our characters, we shall have no portion in God's house above. v. 35.

4. Pious ancestry, without our own personal piety, is of no avail as to our salvation. v. 39. Compare Matt. 3: 9.

CHAPTER IX.

AND as *Jesus* passed by, he saw a man which was blind from *his* birth.

2 And his disciples asked

CHAPTER IX.

1. *Passed by;* was passing along, perhaps just after the event mentioned in the preceding verse.

2. *Who did sin, this man or his parents?* &c. The Jews were in the habit of regarding prosperity and adversity in this life as connected with innocence, and with guilt, of character. There were in the Mosaic law many promises of temporal good as connected with obedience, and threats of evil as connected with transgression. The idea, too, expressed in Ex. 20: 5, and elsewhere, that God would visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and the fourth generation, was too readily applied by them to particular adverse events. Compare Ezek. 18: 2. Hence it was natural to inquire whether the blindness of this man was to be regarded as a punishment of some sin committed by his parents. There was also prevalent, among some of the nations with which the Jews were in various ways connected, an opinion that the souls of men passed, after the death of the body, into other bodies, either of men or of animals, and were happy or miserable in accordance with the character sustained in the preceding body. There seem, also, to have been some vague notions respecting the existence of *souls* previously to the formation of the bodies which they were to occupy. An inference would easily be drawn from these notions, that the moral character of the soul, as previously existing, would influence the condition of the person on earth, making him happy or miserable. Some of the Jewish teachers appear also to have maintained that, previously to an infant's birth, it might commit sin. Now, in view of all these notions, and without any set-

him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind?

3 Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

4 I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

5 As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

6 When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

7 And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

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tied opinions in regard to them, the disciples asked, what was the opinion of their Master as to the present instance. As the event of the man's blindness would generally be referred to some sin as having caused it, they sought information on the question, by whose sins this was caused. Was it in consequence of some sin committed by his parents, or some sin committed by himself before his birth, as some of the teachers might say, or some sin committed in a different state of existence?

3. *Neither hath this man sinned, nor*, &c. That is, neither as a consequence of his own sins, nor as a consequence of his parents' sins, was this blindness ordered. So far as the blindness was concerned, they had not sinned; and this calamity ought not to be regarded, either in respect to the man himself, or in respect to his parents, as a punishment for sin. ‖ *But that the works of God*, &c. This calamity of blindness was permitted, so that there might be occasion for manifesting the miraculous power of God. Not to any particular sin, then, was the calamity to be traced; it was to be regarded as a providential event, arranged by infinite wisdom, with reference to a manifestation of the power of God.

4. *I must work*, &c.; it becomes me to be performing the works for which the Father has sent me into the world. ‖ *While it is day; the night cometh*, &c. It is a general truth that labor must be performed in the day-time; the night is not a suitable time for labor. The time, then, which any one has for performing the duties assigned him, may be called *day*; the time following this, when, by death or other causes, he can no longer perform such duties, may be called *night*. Thus we speak of *the day of life, the night of death*. Our Lord conveyed the idea, that he must diligently employ his *lifetime* in works appropriate to the object of his mission. Soon he was to die, and the opportunities for performing such works would cease.

5. *The light of the world*. Light, used metaphorically, is an image of happiness. Jesus was the author of true happiness, and, in this capacity, it became him to relieve such cases of misery as the one then before him.

6. *Clay*. This word here means earth mixed with spittle. ‖ *Anointed*; smeared over.

7. *Siloam*. See on Luke 13: 4. The streams flowing from the fountain of Siloam were conducted into two pools, called the upper and the lower. To one of these allusion is made in Is. 7: 3. ‖ *Which is, by interpretation, Sent*. The name *Siloam* is derived from a Hebrew word which signifies *to send*.

The reasons why our Lord performed the cure in this particular manner, cannot be known. The remarks on Mark 7: 33 are applicable

8 The neighbors therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

9 Some said, This is he: others *said*, He is like him: *but* he said, I am *he*.

10 Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

11 He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus, made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

12 Then said they unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not.

13 They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind.

14 And it was the Sabbath-day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes.

15 Then again the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see.

16 Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath-day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? And there was a division among them.

17 They say unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened thine eyes? He said, He is a prophet.

18 But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight.

19 And they asked them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? How then doth he now see?

20 His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

21 But by what means he

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to this case. Jesus might have designed to excite in the blind man an expectation of a cure, and, at the same time, by sending him to Siloam, to test his confidence. As there was manifestly no natural connection between the acts performed and the obtaining of sight, the gift of sight would be understood by the man as being miraculous. By sending him to Siloam, Jesus also furnished occasion for numbers of people to know respecting the miracle. According to the statements of Jewish writers, it was forbidden to put spittle on the eyebrows during the Sabbath, just as it was forbidden to make any medical application on the Sabbath, unless there was danger of immediate death. Perhaps our Lord designed, in connection with bestowing an invaluable blessing on an unhappy man, to show the utter futility of such superstitious notions.

16. *Not of God, because he keepeth not the Sabbath-day.* Compare 5: 16.

17. *What sayest thou of him, that he hath opened, &c.* What opinion does the circumstance of his having given thee sight lead thee to form of him? || *A prophet;* a religious teacher, with a divine commission. As miracles had been performed by the ancient prophets, and had often been an appendage to the prophetic office, the man supposed that Jesus could not be less than a divinely-commissioned teacher.

now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

22 These *words* spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.

23 Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask him.

24 Then again called they the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give God the praise: we know that this man is a sinner.

25 He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner *or no*, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

26 Then said they to him again, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes?

27 He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear *it* again? will ye also be his disciples?

28 Then they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples.

29 We know that God spake unto Moses; *as for* this *fellow*, we know not from whence he is.

30 The man answered and said unto them, Why, herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and *yet* he hath opened mine eyes.

31 Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

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22. *He was Christ;* he was the Messiah. ‖ *Put out of the synagogue;* be excommunicated. The Jewish excommunication was a severe punishment. There were three degrees of it. The first excluded the person from intercourse with the people, even with his own family, for the space of thirty days; he was not allowed to approach a Jew at a distance nearer than four cubits. If he gave no signs of penitence, the time could be doubled, and even trebled. The second separated the person from all sacred meetings, was accompanied with dreadful curses, and forbade all intercourse with others. The third was still severer, and was regarded as a final and total exclusion of the person from the community.

24. *Give God the praise;* or, as literally rendered, *give glory to God.* This expression was used among the Hebrews when they wished to draw forth a confession of the truth. Compare Josh. 7: 19. The Jews, then, did not mean to say, on the present occasion, Give to God, and not to Jesus, the glory of this miracle; but, Revere God, and give glory to him, by telling us the truth. They wished him to declare solemnly, as in the presence of God, whether he had really been born blind, and had now obtained sight, or whether there had not been some deception practised in repect to the matter. ‖ *We know that this man is a sinner.* In order that their solemn injunction might lead to some acknowledgment on the part of the man unfavorable to Jesus, they declare it as their undoubted conviction that Jesus was a wicked impostor.

27. *Will ye also be,* &c. Do you wish to become, &c.

29. *From whence he is.* Whence he derived his authority. They imply that he certainly did not come from God, and they leave it to be understood that he came self-appointed, or influenced by Satan.

31. *God heareth not sinners,* &c Compare Ps. 66: 18.

32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

33 If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

34 They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out: and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

36 He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

37 And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

38 And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

39 And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world; that they which see not might see, and that they which see might be made blind.

40 And *some* of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also?

41 Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth.

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34. *Thou wast altogether born in sins.* This they concluded from the fact of his having been born blind. In their excitement against him, they reviled him as having been peculiarly a sinner, an object of God's displeasure, and therefore peculiarly unfit to dispute with *them*, and to enforce his convictions on *them*, the leaders of the nation. ‖ *They cast him out;* from their presence, and excommunicated him.

38. *Worshipped him;* reverently bowed down before him.

39. *For judgment;* for effecting a righteous judgment on men according to their different characters; for awarding to them just treatment. ‖ *That they which see not might see;* that the ignorant might be taught, and made wise. ‖ *That they which see might be made blind;* that those who have the reputation of possessing knowledge might be shown to be ignorant, and, in consequence of their persisting in their own fancied knowledge, might be condemned to continued ignorance. Such was the result of our Lord's coming into this world. Those who felt that they needed a divine teacher received his instructions, and became truly wise in respect to eternal life; those who were puffed up with the vain notion that they were already enlightened and wise, and that they did not need the instructions of Jesus, rejected him, persisted in their own ignorant and perverse views of religious subjects, and thus were proved to be really ignorant. Compare Matt. 11: 25. Luke 10: 21.

40. *Are we blind also?* The cavilling spirit of the Pharisees again displayed itself. In a petulant and taunting manner, they asked him, Are we without knowledge? Are you only possessed of knowledge, so as to be able to teach others? In their excitement, they might have intended to insult our Lord by seeming not to understand him, and by dwelling on the literal meaning of the word *blind;* as if they had said, And are we, too, like this man, blind?

41. *If ye were blind;* if ye were really destitute of proper faculties and opportunities for obtaining knowledge. ‖ *Ye should have no sin;* ye would be blameless. Compare 15: 22, 24. ‖ *Ye say, We see;* you profess to have knowledge and to be guides. Besides, they really did have within their reach the means of information. ‖ *Your sin remaineth.* It was customary to speak of sin as *being re-*

CHAPTER X.

VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

2 But he that entereth in by the door, is the shepherd of the sheep.

3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

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moved, or *taken away*, when it was pardoned. See on 1: 29. Hence, when it was not pardoned, *it remained on a person*. The idea then is, Your sins are not forgiven.

REFLECTIONS. 1. In all our calamities, let us acknowledge the providence of God, as having some wise and merciful design. vs. 3, 4.

2. The blessings which Jesus has bestowed on a guilty world show that he was indeed *the divine teacher* and *the Saviour*. vs. 25, 30—33. Are we ever perplexed with doubt as to the truth of Christianity? Let us examine what it *has done* and *is daily doing* for men. By its *works* let it be known.

3. A fair and candid mind soon sees, yes, it *feels*, the truth of the claims which Jesus makes, as the Saviour, on our belief and obedience. vs. 17, 35—38.

4. An humble sense of our deficiencies is a needful preparation to profit by the gospel. A haughty, self-confident spirit will receive no blessing. v. 39. Compare James 4: 6.

5. Our obligations and our dangers are proportioned to our advantages. v. 41. And O how dreadful to live and die in the midst of Christian privileges, with a load of unpardoned guilt on our heads!

CHAPTER X.

The former part of this chapter is believed to be very closely connected, as to the occasion on which it was spoken, with the preceding chapter. In v. 21, allusion is made to the miracle of healing the blind man, and no intimation is given by the writer that what he is now about to record was spoken on another occasion. In the preceding chapter, v. 24, the leaders of the Jews had expressly and decidedly declared that Jesus was a sinner. This declaration in reference to one who claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of God, was equivalent to a declaration that he was an impostor, a deceiver of the people, and one who ought not to be followed as a leader. The knowledge that such a declaration had been made had, doubtless, come to Jesus; and he availed himself of the opportunity when some of the Pharisees (*see 9*: 40) were present, with others (see 10: 19), to show the impropriety of such a declaration, to describe the qualities of a true guide, and thus to furnish the means of forming an opinion both respecting himself and respecting those who professed to be the proper religious guardians of the people. For this purpose he adopted the figure of a sheep-fold and a shepherd. By describing the qualities of a shepherd, he wished to draw attention to himself, as being, not an impostor, but truly the guide and protector, that is, the Saviour, of men.

1. *The sheep-fold.* This was an enclosure, surrounded sometimes by low stone walls, and sometimes by a fence of wicker-work, and furnished with a gate. Into this enclosure the sheep were driven for the night.

3. *The porter;* the keeper of the gate, a servant whom the shepherd employed to keep guard during the night. ‖ *He calleth his own sheep by name.* Sheep were objects of much endearment in Oriental countries, and names were given them to which they became accustomed; just as some domestic animals among us receive names from their owners. ‖ *Leadeth them out.* In those parts of the world, the sheep were not driven before a person, but the shep-

4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them

7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be

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herd went before, and they followed him.

The characteristics of a good shepherd, as given in vs. 1—5, are these: 1. He comes honestly and uprightly into the fold. 2. The sheep know him, and he has an intimate acquaintance with them. 3. He carefully guides the sheep, and they follow him. As the Lord and guide of his people, these characteristics are found in Jesus Christ. While our Saviour thus described *himself* as the true shepherd, and furnished hints for distinguishing the unfaithful guides of the people at that time, he also gave a description of those who, in all subsequent ages, should act by his authority, and should be worthy to be called shepherds.

6. *They understood not what things they were*, &c. They perceived not fully the meaning of the parable. In other instances, also, the Saviour's parables were not understood. Still, they were not lost. They made an impression; and at a subsequent period they would be recollected and rightly apprehended. The parables were intended for coming ages too, as well as for the companies which first heard them.

7. *Jesus said unto them again.* He resumed the same topic and employed the same figure. What follows in several successive verses is partly an explanation of the parable, and partly an addition to it; an extended application to himself of the illustration furnished by a sheep-fold and a shepherd. He first drew instruction respecting himself from the *sheep-fold;* representing himself as the *door*, both in respect to shepherds and in respect to the sheep.

8. *All that ever came before me.* This language is not to be taken in so extensive a sense as to include the truly pious leaders of the people in former ages. It was intended to cover a very considerable space of time before the coming of Jesus, when the high priesthood and other sacred offices had become exceedingly degenerate, and were rather sources of emolument to those who bore them, than means of serving and benefiting the people. It would also particularly apply to the very generation that was contemporary with Jesus. All that had appeared *among them* as religious guides, before Jesus, and not connected with Jesus, had proved themselves quite destitute of the proper characteristics. ‖ *Are thieves and robbers;* not true shepherds, careful for the welfare of the flock, but intent on their own gain and emolument. ‖ *The sheep did not hear them;* the truly pious did not follow them as their leaders. Thus those who had assumed the office of a spiritual shepherd without deriving it from Jesus the Messiah, or without reference to his authority, and to the great principles which he was enforcing, were not true shepherds.

9. *I am the door. By me if any man enter in*, &c. In respect, likewise, to the members of the flock, he is the door. It is only through him that men can come into a state of safety and happiness, just as only through the gate can a sheep pass in and out. ‖ *Enter in;* into the fold,

saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

10 The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.

12 But he that is a hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scatterеth the sheep.

13 The hireling fleeth, because he is a hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

14 I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine.

15 As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.

16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, *and* one shepherd.

17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again.

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as a member of the flock. ‖ *He shall be saved;* shall be secure.

10. *The thief.* Jesus next passed to draw a contrast between himself and those who professed to lead the people, but who in reality were seeking only their own gain. Thus he illustrated his own solicitude for the welfare of his people, as being *the true, the good shepherd.* ‖ *That they might have life;* have true happiness. Jesus came, not for his own sake, but for the sake of his people; not for any personal emolument, but for *their* highest welfare.

11. *Giveth his life for the sheep;* will himself die, rather than that the sheep should be destroyed.

14. *Know my sheep.* The word *know* has here, as in various other places, the additional idea of *loving* and *caring for.* The meaning of the verse is, I tenderly love my sheep, and am loved by them; between me and them there is a strong mutual attachment.

15. This verse, as it stands in the original, is a more full declaration of the mutual love which exists between Christ and his followers. That love is compared to the mutual love which exists between the Father and Christ. The meaning of the verse would be more obvious, if it were not separated from the preceding verse, and if the first word were fully translated. Thus, vs. 14, 15—*I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine, even as the Father knoweth me and I know the Father;* the word *know* having here the additional idea of *loving.* *For the sheep;* in behalf of them, so as to secure their highest interests; in plain language, for the salvation of my people.

16. *Not of this fold;* not of the Jewish nation. Jesus was to gather a people from among the Gentiles. ‖ *One fold.* The separation between Jews and Gentiles was to end, and the company of the Saviour's followers, to be formed out of them both, was to be one body. Compare Eph. 2: 13—18.

17. *That I might take it again.* The design of Jesus in laying down his life was, the salvation of his people (see v. 15); and his laying it down was to be followed by his resuming it. The word *that* expresses here *a result* which would be connected with the giving up of his life; as if he had said, I lay down my life, yet so that I shall take it again. Christ's subjection to death was to be eminently

18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.

19 There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings.

20 And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?

21 Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?

22 And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter.

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a temporary one. Compare Heb. 10: 12, 13. 7: 25.

18. *No man taketh it from me;* that is, against my own will. ‖ *Lay it down of myself;* of my own accord. His death was to be a voluntary one. Compare Matt. 26: 53, 54. ‖ *Commandment;* direction, charge.

20. *And is mad;* is beside himself, talks in a senseless manner. Compare 7: 20. 8: 48.

HINTS. 1. The comparison of Jesus to a shepherd shows the affectionate care which he exercises over his followers. Compare Ps. 23.

2. This comparison should teach us the necessity of a cordial submission to his guidance. Can we be safe amid our numerous spiritual foes without the care and guidance of the great and good Shepherd?

3. What compassion for his people, and what concern for their salvation, that he should die for them! v. 11. Compare 15: 13. Rom. 5: 8.

4. The repeated mention of Christ's *dying* for his people clearly shows, that there was a special efficacy in his death, as procuring their salvation. Compare 3: 14, 15. 1 Pet. 2: 24. 3: 18.

5. Notice the extensiveness of the Saviour's love. v. 16.

6. How sadly does prejudice blind the mind! And how great is the need of divine illumination in order rightly to discern and truly to relish the instructions of Christ! v. 20.

7. The character and acts of Jesus carry conviction to a candid mind, that his doctrines are true. v. 21.

22. *The feast of the dedication.* About 170 years before the birth of Christ, Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, inflicted great cruelties on the Jews, ordered them to change their religion, and to embrace his own idolatrous system, forbade their usual sacrifices, their festivals, and their Sabbath. In order to pollute the temple, and drive the Jews from their sacred observances, he placed a statue of the heathen god Jupiter Olympius on the altar of the temple, and offered up a hog in mock-sacrifice. For the space of three years, the temple remained desecrated and deserted. At the end of three years, Judas Maccabeus, with an army of faithful Jews, obtained remarkable successes over the generals of Antiochus, and restored the worship of the nation. This joyful event was followed by a festival of eight days; and it became thenceforward a custom annually to celebrate, by a festival of eight days, this renewal of worship, and this new dedication of the temple. It occurred in the Jewish month Kisleu, corresponding to our December. It was this festival which is here denominated *the dedication.* It was also called by other names; for instance, *the days of the dedication* [renewal] *of the altar, the purification of the temple,* also by the single name *Lights,* because the Jews profusely lighted their houses during the festival, in remembrance of the return of peace and joy. In the apocryphal books, 1 Maccabees 4: 52—59, 2 Macc. 10: 1—8, an account is given of this new consecration of the temple.

23 And Jesus walked in the temple in Solomon's porch.

24 Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.

25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave *them* me, is greater than all; and none is able to pluck *them* out of my Father's hand.

30 I and *my* Father are one.

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23. *In Solomon's porch.* The temple was furnished with various porches, or porticoes. Of these the eastern one was called Solomon's. It was so called, probably, because it occupied the precise spot of the one originally built by Solomon, and was believed to stand on the foundation which Solomon had laid. It was believed that the original portico was not wholly destroyed when the temple was laid waste by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25: 9); and the one standing in our Saviour s time was regarded as only a repairing of the original one.

24. *Make us to doubt;* keep us in suspense.

25. *I told you.* Whether or not Jesus had said expressly that he was the Messiah, he habitually used language which was equivalent to such a declaration, and which the Jews understood as equivalent to such a declaration. He had not practised concealment, nor had he purposely kept any one in a tormenting suspense. Compare 5: 17, 19, &c. 6: 29, 35, 48. See, also, 6: 68, 69. At the same time, he knew that a positive declaration by himself, however plainly made, would carry with it no conviction, and would not be adapted to the just demands of reflecting persons. Such a declaration the chief men among the Jews would doubtless abuse, as they actually did afterwards. See Matt. 26: 63—66. Jesus therefore referred them to the evidences of his being the Messiah, which were furnished by his miraculous works. Such a course he pursued, when the messengers of John the Baptist proposed a similar inquiry. See Matt. 11: 4, 5.

26. *Ye are not of my sheep;* ye possess not that pious disposition which characterizes my true followers, and which is necessary in order rightly to discern and to estimate my instructions and my claims; ye are not truly pious. Sheep are an emblem of the innocent and pious, who submit themselves to the guidance of God and of those whom he has qualified and authorized to be spiritual guides. Compare Matt. 25: 33. ‖ *As I said unto you.* These words ought properly to commence the next verse, as in sense they are immediately connected with the words that follow. Thus; *As I said unto you, my sheep hear my voice, &c.* Jesus had made a declaration which was equivalent to such a remark. See verse 14; and compare v. 3.

27. *My sheep;* the truly pious, who follow me.

28. *They shall never perish.* Compare 6: 35, 39, 40. Rom. 8: 30—39.

29. *Which gave them me.* See 6: 37, 39. 17: 2.

30. *I and my Father are one.* This remark was made with reference to the protection and salvation of those who follow Christ, as his disciples. The Saviour asserted, therefore, that between him and the Father there

31 Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him.

32 Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do ye stone me?

33 The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.

34 Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?

35 If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken;

36 Say ye of him whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?

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was a union as to design and as to power, in respect to the protection of his followers. Such was this union, that those who were defended by Christ were really defended by the Father. In the work of men's salvation, the Father and the Son acted conjointly. Our Lord thus claimed a relation to God which no mere human being could claim; and this claim rests, for its basis, on the fact that he was really a partaker of divine attributes. Compare 1 : 1. Col. 1 : 16—19.

31. *To stone him.* See on 8 : 5.

32. *Many good works have I showed you;* have I performed in your presence.

33. *For blasphemy.* The Jews on this occasion used the word *blasphemy* as signifying *irreverence* towards God, in that Jesus had employed language respecting himself which it could be proper for no mere human being to employ. Blasphemy is properly a calumniating and reviling of God; and as such, the Mosaic law punished it with death. See Lev. 24 : 15, 16. ‖ *Makest thyself God.* This charge is substantially the same as is mentioned in 5 : 18, that he made himself "equal with God." They declared, that he had claimed divine power. The language which Jesus had used was indeed remarkable, and could have been suggested only by his consciousness of possessing a most peculiar connection with the Father, and a union of nature as well as of design and counsels.

34. *In your law.* The word *law* here includes the whole of the Jewish Scriptures, of which the law of Moses, the pentateuch, was the first and a principal part. ‖ *Ye are gods.* The passage here quoted occurs in Psalm 82 : 6; "I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children [sons] of the Most High." The Saviour quoted a part of this verse, knowing that his hearers would recollect the rest. This language was originally used in reference to magistrates and judges. On account of the power pertaining to their office, the title *gods* and *sons of God* was applied to them. The Supreme God was THE GREAT RULER; hence magistrates, being earthly *rulers*, were called *gods*.

35. *Unto whom the word of God came;* who by divine appointment became rulers. It was by the providence of God, that men were elevated to stations of power and dignity; particularly among the Jews, magistracy was regulated by *the word of God*, by the arrangement, or appointment, of God. ‖ *The Scripture cannot be broken.* These words are a mere parenthetic clause, reminding the Jews that an argument drawn from their own Scriptures could not be consistently resisted; both by their own acknowledgment and by right, the Scripture could not be made void.

36. *Sanctified.* This word, besides meaning *made holy*, also means *consecrated, set apart to a peculiar service.* Such is its meaning here. Christ was

37 If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.

38 But if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the Father *is* in me, and I in him.

39 Therefore they sought again to take him; but he escaped out of their hand,

40 And went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle; but all things that John spake of this man were true.

42 And many believed on him there.

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set apart, consecrated, to the office of Messiah. The argument which the Saviour presented in vs. 34—36, may be thus expressed: Since, according to the Scripture, men in power, as magistrates and rulers, are called *gods*, and *sons of God*, is it impious irreverence in me, who have been set apart by the Father to the office of Messiah, and sent into the world as the Messiah, possessing power and dignity unspeakably superior to those of any earthly ruler, — is it impious irreverence in me to call myself *the Son of God?* Was it right for them to be called *gods* and *sons of God?* and can it be wrong in me to speak of myself as *the Son of God?* Jesus had spoken very familiarly respecting God as his Father, and as being his Father in a very peculiar sense; hence he had in reality called himself the Son of God. This title would belong to Jesus by virtue of his being the Messiah, a spiritual king, to whose dignity and power there could be no parallel. Whatever else the Jews could say respecting him, they surely could not, if guided by their own Scriptures, prove him to have spoken blasphemously, unless they could prove him not to have been the Messiah. Jesus confined himself in this argument to the single point of *not being guilty of impious irreverence.* He did not enter on the question, Whether or not he possessed true divinity; he only vindicated himself against the accusation which had been made.

37. Having thus persisted in his claim to be the Messiah, and therefore justly entitled to the epithet *Son of God*, Jesus again referred to the proper source of evidence; namely, the works which he had performed. *The works of my Father;* such works as my Father performs, and such as proceed from his authority. Compare 5: 17, 19—23. 10: 25.

38. *Though ye believe not me;* though ye believe not my declarations. ‖ *Believe the works;* receive the evidence furnished by the miraculous works. See v. 25. ‖ *The Father is in me, and I in him;* between me and the Father is a most intimate union, so that we are one in counsel and in action. The acts of the Father may be called my acts, and my acts may be called the Father's. The claim which I thus make, the Father approves and sustains. See v. 30. 5: 19.

40. *Beyond Jordan, where*, &c. See 1: 28.

41. *All things that John spake of this man.* Much that John the Baptist was in the habit of speaking concerning Jesus, has not been recorded; but as specimens of his declarations, see 1: 27, 29. 3: 27—36. ‖ *Were true;* have been proved true by the excellent teaching, and character, and works of this man, that is, Jesus.

Reflections. 1. How necessary is a pious spirit in order to receive the instructions of the Bible! v. 26. Compare 7: 17.

2. How safe are those who feel their dependence on Christ, as a Guide and Saviour, and who abide in their reliance on him! vs. 27, 28. But it is only by cherishing a sense of this dependence, and by following the guidance of Christ, that we can en-

CHAPTER XI.

NOW a certain *man* was sick, *named* Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha.

2 (It was *that* Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.)

3 Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick.

4 When Jesus heard *that*, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.

5 Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus.

6 When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was.

7 Then after that saith he to *his* disciples, Let us go into Judea again.

8 *His* disciples say unto him, Master, the Jews of late sought to stone thee; and goest thou thither again?

9 Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world.

10 But if a man walk in the

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joy a rational persuasion of being his disciples. The promises of security which Christ has made, cannot justly be employed as inducements to negligence in obeying and serving him. Duty and safety are inseparably united.

CHAPTER XI.

1. *Bethany.* See on Mark 11: 1. Matt. 26: 6.

2. *That Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment.* See 12: 2, 3. Matt. 26: 6, 7.

4. *He said;* that is, to the person who brought the tidings. By him Jesus sent back the reply to Mary and Martha. ‖ *Not unto death;* not a fatal sickness, in the ordinary sense of the language. Compare Matt. 9: 24. Jesus was intending to raise up Lazarus from the dead; so that though Lazarus was to die, yet his death was not to be a final separation from this world; he was yet to live on earth in company with his sisters. ‖ *But for the glory of God.* This sickness was intended as an occasion for performing a signal miracle, which should reflect great honor on the Son of God. Jesus returned an obscure message to the sisters of Lazarus. It was adapted, however, after Lazarus had actually died, to excite the hope of his being raised up again to life.

8. *Sought to stone thee.* See 8: 59. 10: 31.

9, 10. *Are there not twelve hours in the day?* The purport of our Lord's remark in these verses is this: There is a proper time for a person to be employed in his calling, and while that time continues, he ought fearlessly to prosecute his work. If the work is not done in that appropriate time, it cannot be done well and safely; just as a traveller can safely prosecute his journey in the day-time, when he enjoys the shining of the sun; and he must not defer his journey till night, when he will be in constant danger of stumbling. In the application of this thought to himself, Jesus should be understood as saying, While my day of labor continues, I can safely and fearlessly perform my work; that day will soon close, the night of death will come, and then there will not be opportunity to perform my work. Jesus thus showed the disciples, that he would not allow himself to be deterred from his

night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him.

11 These things said he: and after that he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep.

12 Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13 Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep.

14 Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.

15 And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless, let us go unto him.

16 Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellow disciples, Let us also go that we may die with him.

17 Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already.

18 (Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off:)

19 And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother.

20 Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house.

21 Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

22 But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee.

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work by fear of the Jews. His work must be performed. ‖ *Twelve hours.* The Jews reckoned twelve hours for the day, and twelve for the night. ‖ *The light of this world;* the sun.

11. *Lazarus sleepeth.* A soft method of announcing his death. Compare 1 Cor. 15 : 20. 1 Thess. 4 : 13.

15. *To the intent ye may believe;* so that ye may believe in me more firmly. So signal a miracle as he was intending to perform, might well have this effect.

16. *Thomas, which is called Didymus.* The meaning of the word *Thomas*, in the dialect used by the disciples, was the same as the meaning of the word *Didymus* in the Greek language; namely, *twin.* See on Matt. 10 : 3. He might, therefore, be called by either name, and John mentioned this circumstance so as to show whom he meant by *Thomas*, inasmuch as the name *Didymus* was very frequently applied to this person. ‖ *That we may die with him.* The disciples feared that Jesus would certainly encounter anew the hostility of the leaders of the Jews, and they apprehended the worst consequences. Still, as he was bent on going, they would not consent that he should go alone; if he would expose himself to death, they would also share in the exposure.

18. *Fifteen furlongs;* about two miles.

19. *Many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them,* &c. It was customary, when death had occurred in a family, for friends to visit the family, in order to console them. This was particularly the case during the seven or eight days which immediately followed the death. Those seven or eight days were peculiarly days of mourning.

22. *Whatsoever thou wilt ask of God,* &c. Martha appears to have cherished a confidence in the ability of Jesus to restore her brother to life, and a faint hope, at least, that he would restore him. She was manifestly, however, in a fluctuating state

23 Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again.

24 Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection, at the last day.

25 Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:

26 And whosoever livèth, and believeth in me, shall never die. Believest thou this?

27 She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.

28 And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee.

29 As soon as she heard *that*, she arose quickly, and came unto him.

30 Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

31 The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary that she rose up hastily, and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

32 Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33 When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

34 And said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see.

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of mind, as might be expected of one so deeply afflicted.

23. *Shall rise again.* Jesus meant, probably, to excite in her mind the belief that he was intending to restore her brother, though he did not declare positively that he would.

24. *He shall rise again at the resurrection.* Martha's grief and despondency seem now to have prevailed; and she was yielding to the fear that her brother would not be speedily raised up to life.

25. Jesus then led her to contemplate himself as possessing the power of raising up from the dead, and of imparting life, even of bestowing immortal life, in order to cherish in her a confidence that he had the requisite power to raise up Lazarus at once. *I am the resurrection;* that is, the author of the resurrection. ‖ *The life;* the giver of life, one in whom a life-giving power dwells. Compare 5: 21, 25—29. ‖ *Shall he live;* shall be restored to life.

26. *Shall never die;* shall have immortal life. Our Lord referred to the continued life and bliss of the soul. In this, the whole person of the believer will share, for the body, though it yields to death, will be raised incorruptible.

27. *Thou art the Christ, &c.* The assured confidence which Martha placed in him as the Messiah, would lead her to confide in his declarations respecting his life-giving power.

31. *Unto the grave, to weep there.* It was common for mourners to visit the tomb during the days of mourning, and to pour out lamentations at that spot.

33. *He groaned in the spirit, and was troubled;* was filled with painful emotion. He sympathized deeply

35 Jesus wept.

36 Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37 And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

38 Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39 Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days.

40 Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

41 Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me:

42 And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by, I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

43 And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and *foot* with grave-clothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin.

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with these afflicted sisters, for he possessed all the tender sensibilities of human nature.

37. *Could not this man, &c.* This was the language of unfriendly feeling towards Jesus.

38. *It was a cave.* Caves, whether natural or artificial, were frequently used for the interment of the dead. ‖ *A stone lay upon it;* lay against it. It was common for sepulchres to be closed by placing a large stone at the entrance. See Matt. 27: 60.

40. *Said I not unto thee, that if, &c.* A declaration in the words here mentioned by our Lord we do not find in this chapter. Doubtless, however, other remarks were made, on this occasion, besides those which are here recorded. The declarations of Jesus, also, in vs. 4, 25, 26, might well excite the hope, that a belief in his ability to raise the dead, would not be exercised in vain, even in respect to the present instance of mortality.

41. *Thou hast heard me.* Jesus knew that the miracle was about to take place.

44. *Bound hand and foot with grave-clothes.* Bandages were often, in the East, bound around each limb of the corpse. These bandages were not, however, so very tight as entirely to hinder motion, when life was restored to Lazarus. ‖ *His face was bound about with a napkin.* Usually, a linen cloth was passed around the forehead, and fastened under the chin. In some instances, it is probable, the whole face was covered. ‖ *Loose him;* that is, from his bandages, which proved an impediment to his walking freely.

Remarks. 1. The resurrection of Lazarus was a peculiarly striking miracle. He had been dead four days, and no one could well doubt that he was actually dead. vs. 17, 39. It was performed in the presence of several witnesses, both friendly and unfriendly to Jesus. vs. 45, 46. No one pretended to deny the reality of the miracle.

2. Jesus distinctly asserted the doctrine of the resurrection and the future life. vs. 23—26. How consoling is this doctrine! Our pious deceased

Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

45 Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

46 But some of them went their ways to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done.

47 Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.

48 If we let him thus alone, all *men* will believe on him: and the Romans shall come, and take away both our place and nation.

49 And one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all,

50 Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.

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friends have not ceased to exist; they have ceased to *live on earth*. In a brighter and a holier world, they are enjoying consummate bliss in the service and the favor of God.

3. Tender sympathy in the woes of others elevates and adorns, as well as softens true dignity. To a Saviour so tender, and so powerful, as Jesus, we may safely commit all our interests. vs. 33—36.

47. *A council;* the Sanhedrim, the highest court of the Jews. ‖ *What do we?* What shall we do? They could not deny the miracle; and it would be vain to ascribe it to Satan's agency. The people could not but be favorably and deeply impressed by such a work; yet the chief priests and Pharisees were determined not to acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah, but in some way to check his progress.

48. *The Romans shall come, &c.* To excite the members of the Sanhedrim against Jesus, the leaders advanced the suggestion that the country and the nation were in danger of being destroyed by the Romans; for the mass of the people, they intimated, would soon follow him, and, led on by him, would raise the standard of rebellion against the Romans, and thus bring down on the nation the weight of the Roman power. The nation did indeed bear the Roman yoke with much dissatisfaction; but none felt this dissatisfaction more than the chief priests and Pharisees. When, however, they wished to carry a favorite point, they could easily dissemble, and pretend to dread certain dangers which they by no means feared. Jesus had uniformly declined usurping temporal power and encouraging popular tumults. ‖ *Take away;* destroy. ‖ *Our place;* our country.

49, 50. *The high priest.* The high priest was also the principal officer in the Sanhedrim, and one whose opinion would have much weight. ‖ *Ye know nothing at all;* ye act very ignorantly and unwisely in permitting Jesus to go at large, and to be securing to himself the affections of the people. ‖ *It is expedient for us;* it would be for our advantage. He appealed not to their sense of justice, for he knew that on that ground Jesus could never be put to death;—he wished to excite in them a fear that their own popularity and dignity were in extreme danger, and that the nation would, in some way, be ruined by means of Jesus. In an excited state of feeling, he called on them to consider what was demanded, not by impartial justice, but by a regard to the safety of the nation. ‖ *That one man should die for the people, &c.*; that it would be better to put to death this one man, Jesus, whether by fair means or unfair, than that the whole nation should be ruined. Thus he founded

51 And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation;

52 And not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad.

53 Then from that day forth they took counsel together for to put him to death.

54 Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued with his disciples.

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his bloody advice upon a pretended patriotism and zeal for the safety of the nation. His object was to bring the Sanhedrim to the point of determining that *Jesus must be put to death*, in some way or other, so that they might be rid of him; and this object the high priest gained. See v. 53.

51. *This spake he not of himself.* The word *of* does not here mean *respecting*, but *from* or *by*. He spoke not this from his own mind; that is, in speaking this, he should be regarded as speaking, not merely by his own wicked suggestion, but also in remarkable accordance with the divine mind, and by a very special providence. ‖ *He prophesied;* he declared beforehand what was really, in the providence of God, and in accordance with the divine plan, to take place. Caiaphas did not intend to utter a prophecy, nor was his design any other than that of effecting the death of Jesus, as an act of pretended state policy. Yet, so coincident was his declaration with what was to take place, that it might well be regarded as prophetic; and the high priest of the Jewish people, their highest officer, might be regarded as an instrument that God employed in announcing a most important part of the divine plan. The declaration which he made God designed to fulfil, though in another and a more extensive sense than Caiaphas intended.

52. *Gather together in one;* into one company. ‖ *The children of God;* those who should become his children; those whom God was purposing to unite to his spiritual family. ‖ *Scattered abroad;* Gentiles, every where dispersed. From among these, as well as from among the Jews, the company of God's children was to be formed; and for these, as well as for Jews, Jesus was to die. Thus the remark of Caiaphas ought to be regarded as signally prophetic, though he had no such intention, and as to be fulfilled in a far wider sense than *he* contemplated. For it really was according to God's purpose that Jesus should be put to death, not for Jews only, but also for Gentiles, for the whole family of God, which should be gathered from among Gentiles, as well as from among Jews.

Suggestions. 1. How differently are different men affected by the same events! Compare vs. 45, 46, 48, 53.

2. How strong is the power of prejudice and ill-will! vs. 49, 50.

3. How easily can God employ, in executing his own purposes, the angry and selfish designs of men, while yet those men are, in those very designs, acting according to their own choice! vs. 51, 52. Compare Ps. 76: 10. Is. 10: 5—7.

53. *They took counsel together for to put him to death.* In accordance with the advice of Caiaphas, the chief members of the Sanhedrim set themselves in earnest to accomplish the death of Jesus.

54. *The wilderness;* the desert of Judea. See on Matt. 3: 1. ‖ *Ephraim.* The situation of this place is not known. Some writers speak of it as being two, others eight, others twenty, miles from Jerusalem.

55 And the Jews' passover was nigh at hand: and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem before the passover, to purify themselves.

56 Then sought they for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast?

57 Now both the chief priests and the Pharisees had given a commandment, that, if any man knew where he were, he should show *it*, that they might take him.

CHAPTER XII.

THEN Jesus, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead.

2 There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him.

3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odor of the ointment.

4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray him,

5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor?

6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because

55. *The Jews' passover.* See on Matt. 26: 2. This was the passover just before the crucifixion of Jesus. ‖ *To purify themselves;* to prepare themselves by purification for attending at the festival. Those Jews who had contracted defilement repaired to Jerusalem some days before the festival, for the sake of becoming thus prepared. The purification consisted in visiting the temple, offering prayers and sacrifices, in abstinence from certain sorts of food, in bathing, and other similar ceremonies. Such services occupied, according to circumstances, from one to six days.

56. *That he will not come to the feast?* There were reasons to suppose that he would not be present; for the Sanhedrim had determined that he should be put to death, and had charged the people to give information if they knew where he could be found. See v. 57. Some, however, knowing that Jesus had been in the habit of attending the passover, and knowing his superiority to fear, believed that he would be present.

CHAPTER XII.

2. *There they made him a supper.* This entertainment, designed to show respect and affection for Jesus, took place at the house of Simon the leper. See Matt. 26: 6. Simon was probably a relative of Lazarus and of his sisters. Hence Martha waited on the company, and Mary performed the special act of kindness which John proceeds to relate.

3. *Spikenard;* an aromatic plant, yielding a costly ointment. Compare Matt. 26: 7. ‖ *Anointed the feet of Jesus, &c.* See on Matt. 26: 7.

4, 5. Compare Matt. 26: 8, 9.

6. See on Matt. 26: 9. *He was a thief, &c.* It came to be known that Judas was a dishonest man, stealing, and applying to his own use the money which the friends of Jesus were in the habit of giving for the comfort of himself and of his immediate followers. ‖ *The bag;* the purse in which money was kept. ‖ *Bare what was put therein.* He had charge of the money which was contributed from time to time, by various individ-

he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

7 Then said Jesus, Let her alone: against the day of my burying hath she kept this.

8 For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.

9 Much people of the Jews therefore knew that he was there: and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.

10 But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death;

11 Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on Jesus.

12 On the next day, much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

13 Took branches of palm-trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna; Blessed *is* the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

14 And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written,

15 Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.

16 These things understood not his disciples at the first: but

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uals. The confidence which had been reposed in him he grossly abused; and indulged a thievish disposition. Under the guise of solicitude for the poor, he found fault with the kind act of Mary. His real wish was that the ointment, instead of being thus used, might have been sold, and the avails entrusted to him. Thus he would have had an opportunity of gratifying his evil propensity.

7, 8. Compare Matt. 26: 10—12.

9. *Therefore.* The word *now* would here better express the original word. The sentence would then be this: *Now much people of the Jews*, &c. The *people* here spoken of were the *common people*, in distinction from the higher classes. || *He was there;* at Bethany.

10. *Put Lazarus also to death.* How manifestly were the chief priests actuated by a dislike of Jesus, and a determination at all hazards to destroy him, and to crush his rising cause! To murder another innocent man, besides Jesus, was not too bad a proposal to meet with favor among them. Thus are the evil hearts of men led on from crime to crime; thus do they sink more and more deeply in guilt. Of what guilt are not men capable, when they withdraw themselves from the influence of the love and the fear of God!

12—15. Compare Matt. 21: 1—11.

13. *Palm-trees.* These trees were anciently considered as the most noble and beautiful of all trees. They are very straight, and ascend to a very lofty height, being destitute of limbs, except near the top, where they appear to be surmounted with a crown of foliage which is always green. The leaves, when the tree has grown to a size sufficient for bearing fruit, are six or eight feet long, and are very broad. The fruit is called *the date*, of a sweet and agreeable taste. Wine is also made from the dates; and the tree, as to trunk, branches, leaves, and fruit, is useful for an immense variety of purposes. Palm branches were emblems of joy and triumph. See on Matt. 21: 8. Compare Rev. 7: 9. These trees were formerly quite numerous in Palestine, and, in connection with a sheaf of wheat and a bunch of grapes, were used as the symbol of the Jewish nation.

16. *Glorified;* raised from the dead

when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and *that* they had done these things unto him.

17 The people therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, and raised him from the dead, bare record.

18 For this cause the people also met him, for that they heard that he had done this miracle.

19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye prevail nothing? behold, the world is gone after him.

20 And there were certain Greeks among them, that came up to worship at the feast.

21 The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.

22 Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again, Andrew and Philip tell Jesus.

23 And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

25 He that loveth his life shall

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and exalted to his glorious state in heaven.

19. *The world, &c.* A strong method of denoting the immense throngs which seemed ready to hail Jesus as the long-expected King.

20. *Greeks.* These persons were probably proselytes to the Jewish religion.

21. *Bethsaida of Galilee.* See 1: 44. || *We would see Jesus;* we wish to see Jesus. These Greek proselytes did not live in Palestine, and had never seen Jesus. They had heard concerning him.

22. *Telleth Andrew.* Philip seems to have consulted with Andrew in regard to this request of the Greeks. Our Lord's disciples had often noticed that he did not encourage the spirit of curiosity. If a person was really desirous of instruction, Jesus was always ready to impart it. But when mere curiosity prompted a person to ask him questions, he either remained silent, or made the questions topics of practical exhortation.

23. *Jesus answered them.* The remarks of Jesus which now follow, were probably made to Philip and Andrew, after he had had an interview with the inquiring Greeks. The fact that persons, not of the Jewish nation, had expressed a desire to become acquainted with him, led him to speak of the glorious state on which he was about to enter, of the spread of the gospel, and of the increase of his followers. || *Should be glorified;* exalted to the glory which, after his death and resurrection, he would possess at the right hand of God. See Mark 16: 19.

24. *A corn of wheat;* a kernel of wheat. Jesus wished to convey the idea, that his cause would be established and become victorious by means of his *death;* just as grain, committed to the earth, must undergo a species of death in order to produce fruit, so he must die in order to accomplish the object for which he came into the world, and to gather a company of followers. In a variety of ways Jesus sought to fix in the minds of his disciples the truth, that the deliverance which he came to effect required his being put to death.

25. In view of the death which awaited Jesus, it was necessary that he himself should possess the spirit of self-denial. His disciples, too, ought to cherish this disposition. If

lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world, shall keep it unto life eternal.

26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

27 Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour.

28 Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying*, I have both glorified *it*, and will glorify *it* again.

29 The people therefore that stood by, and heard *it*, said that it thundered. Others said, An angel spake to him.

30 Jesus answered and said,

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they should be unwilling to endure calamities on earth for his sake, they would fail to attain the bliss which he could give them in heaven; but, should they faithfully adhere to him, and encounter the sorrows incident on earth to being his disciples, they would receive the blessing of eternal life. To them, therefore, he applied the general rule, that, if a person should love life on earth so much that he would not part with it for his sake, he would lose eternal life; and that, if a person should love *him* more than life on earth, so as to be willing to expose himself to death for the sake of Jesus, he would secure life eternal. *He that loveth his life*; he that loves life on earth more than my cause. ‖ *Shall lose it;* shall lose it, in the highest sense, that is, in eternity; shall lose his soul. ‖ *He that hateth his life;* comparatively speaking; that is, he that loves life on earth *less* than he loves my cause, so as to prefer my cause before his life. ‖ *Shall keep it, &c.*; shall preserve his life, in the highest sense; shall secure his soul's salvation. Compare Matt. 10: 39.

26. *Follow me;* obey me, and imitate my self-denial in enduring calamities for righteousness' sake. ‖ *Where I am;* in the glorious state to which I am going.

27. *Now is my soul troubled.* The near prospect of intense sufferings occasioned agitation in the Saviour's mind; he was not insensible to suffering, nor did he affect a cold indifference to it; but, while he anticipated his painful death in all its anguish, he yet submissively resigned himself to the divine allotment. ‖ *Save me from this hour;* from the expected hour of calamity. Our Lord here seems to have presented a petition which he instantly felt to be inconsistent with the object for which he had come into the world, and he therefore at once retracted it. We may regard him as for a moment feeling the dread which the prospect of suffering naturally excites, and expressing himself in the same manner as he afterwards did, according to Matt. 26: 39; or we may adopt the suggestion of distinguished editors of the Greek Testament, who place a note of interrogation at the word *hour*. The language of the Saviour would then be the following: *What shall I say?* [shall I say] *Father, save me from this hour?* ‖ *For this cause;* for enduring the very calamities, the anticipation of which now occasions anguish to my soul.

28. *Glorify thy name.* Thus the Saviour meekly acquiesced in the will of God, and expressed his controlling desire that his Father might be honored, whatever sufferings he himself must endure. ‖ *I have glorified it.* God had already, through the character, the teaching, and the miracles of Jesus, in a glorious manner displayed his benevolence, and power, and wisdom. ‖ *Glorify it again;* by the resurrection of Jesus, by exalting him to the heavenly throne, and causing the successful diffusion of the gospel.

This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes.

31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

32 And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* unto me.

33 (This he said, signifying what death he should die.)

34 The people answered him, We have heard out of the law that Christ abideth forever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of man?

35 Then Jesus said unto them, Yet a little while is the light with you. Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon

31. *Now is the judgment of this world.* The *world* here means the *adversaries of Jesus*, as distinguished from his disciples. *Judgment* is here equivalent to *condemnation* and *loss of power*. The adversaries of the Saviour are here represented as brought to trial, condemned, and stripped of their power to impede the progress of his cause. ‖ *The prince of this world;* Satan, regarded as ruling in the hearts of the Saviour's adversaries. Compare Eph. 2:2. ‖ *Cast out;* from his dominion. His power shall be restrained. Compare Luke 10:18. The death of Jesus, which was approaching, would be followed by his triumphant resurrection, and the establishment of his cause.

32. *Lifted up from the earth;* put to death. As Jesus knew that he was to be crucified, this manner of expression was peculiarly appropriate. Compare 3:14. 8:28. ‖ *Will draw unto me;* will turn to my interests. ‖ *All men.* This expression is here a general one, signifying the *great multitudes* that should become followers of Christ, and partakers of his blessings. Small, comparatively, as was then the number of our Lord's true followers, that number was to be immensely enlarged. The word *all* is used here in a sense similar to that which it has in Matt. 3:5, and which the word *every* has in Luke 16:16. There might also have been intended a comparison between "the prince of this world," who had, thus far, seemed to have entire sway among men, and the Messiah, who would acquire a wide dominion, a dominion which would accomplish the crumbling away and the entire subversion of Satan's dominion. The current would hereafter set in favor of Jesus, and to him would "the gathering of the people be."

34. *The law;* the Jewish Scriptures, as in 10:34. ‖ *Christ abideth forever;* that the Messiah should not die. The Scriptures taught that the reign of the Messiah should have no end. See Is. 9:7. Dan. 7:14. Some of the Jews inferred from such statements that the Messiah would exercise an endless reign on earth, and would, consequently, not die. Hence they inquired who it could be of whom Jesus was speaking. The phrase *Son of man* had probably been employed by Jesus during this conversation; and to the Saviour's use of that phrase the question of the Jews alluded.

35. Without particularly replying to their inquiry, Jesus solemnly cautioned his hearers not to reject him, but to secure the blessings which he was proposing to them, while the opportunity should continue. *The light;* the author of true knowledge and bliss. ‖ *Walk while*, &c.; while the light shines around you, walk in it. That is, while you have the means of attaining true knowledge and bliss, avail yourselves of the opportunity. ‖ *Lest darkness come upon you;* lest you become wholly enveloped with error and wretchedness. ‖ *He that walketh in darkness knoweth not*, &c. As one who is travelling in a dark night is in constant danger of mis-

you: for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth.

36 While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light. These things spake Jesus, and departed, and did hide himself from them.

37 But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

38 That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?

39 Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again,

40 He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart;

taking his way and of falling into difficulty, so you, if you follow not my instructions, will be under the influence of error, and sink into misery.

36. *While ye have light;* while the divine teacher and Saviour is among you. ‖ *Believe in the light;* receive the instructions, and accept the guidance, of this teacher and Saviour. ‖ *The children of light.* By a Hebrew idiom, the word *children* or *sons* is used to express some peculiar relation to the object mentioned. Thus, a *son of death* means *a person worthy of death;* a *son of peace,* one to whom peace, or prosperity, properly belongs. So *children of light* are those by whom the blessings of divine knowledge and salvation shall be enjoyed.

38. *That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled.* Compare Is. 53: 1. The meaning of the evangelist is, not that the people did not believe *in order that* the language of the prophet might be accomplished, but that, in their refusing to believe in Jesus as the Messiah, the language of the prophet received an additional accomplishment. The miracles and the teaching of Jesus had this result, — that the people refused to receive him; and thus the language of Isaiah might well be applied to them. ‖ *Our report;* our instruction. ‖ *To whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* Who has beheld the manifestations of divine power so as to be persuaded by them to turn to the Lord? Whom has the power of the Lord drawn to become the followers of the Messiah? This language of lamentation over the smallness of the number whom the prophet beheld as truly benefited, was peculiarly applicable to the times of Jesus.

39, 40. *Therefore they could not believe, &c.* The idea expressed in these two verses is, that the people were so much under the influence of a perverse and hardened state of heart, that, though the evidence of the truth was plainly and fully before their eyes, though ample instruction was furnished them, yet they would persevere in resisting the evidence and rejecting the instruction. This thought is expressed in language quoted from Is. 6: 9, 10. The quotation is not an exact one, but was intended merely to convey the thought. And what Isaiah had said in that passage, respecting the Jews of his time, might be regarded as fulfilled anew in the case of the Jews in our Saviour's time, and might be adopted as a very true description of them. The evangelist did not mean to say that the people in the time of Jesus *were hindered* from believing in him by the fact that Isaiah had made such a declaration, but that they could not believe because they had the state of heart which Isaiah's language described. ‖ *He hath blinded their eyes, &c.* In the Bible, effects are ascribed to God, without in the least degree detracting from the agency of men or of Satan, in respect to those effects; so that, according to the unfettered language of the Bible, the same thing, viewed as an effect, may be ascribed

that they should not see with *their* eyes, nor understand with *their* heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

41 These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him.

42 Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:

43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

44 Jesus cried, and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me:

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either to God, or to Satan, or to man. If God foresees that certain results will take place, in consequence of his commanding or permitting certain things, he is said to accomplish those results, while yet the men who are personally concerned are guilty or virtuous according to the nature of the action. See on Matt. 6: 13. Compare also Deut. 29: 4. Thus, in the passage quoted from Isaiah, God commissioned his prophet to exercise the prophetic office among the Jews, and to address them with the utmost plainness, in the name of God. At the same time, he knew that they would reject the prophet's message; and this refusing to receive the prophet's instructions, and to turn to God, was chargeable on themselves, and would greatly aggravate their guilt and their doom. But, though it was foreseen that they would thus abuse and pervert the prophet's instructions, he was still directed to go to them, and, by giving them warnings which they would pervert, make their hearts hard, and blind their eyes. Now, the prophet would not be culpable for this result, but the people themselves. So God may be said to blind the eyes of men when he spreads before them light, from which he knows they will turn away. The men blind their own eyes, but the *occasion* of their being thus guilty is the fact that light from God is spread before them. When, then, it is said, *He hath blinded their eyes*, &c., the meaning is, simply, *their eyes are blinded, their hearts are hardened;* and this blinding and hardening take place, not by God's direct agency, but by occasion of his having presented religious opportunities to men, and by their abusing or neglecting of those opportunities. ‖ *That they should not see*, &c. In accordance with the scriptural mode of speaking, these words may be rendered, *So that they will not see — nor understand — nor be converted.* Compare Matt. 13 11—15. Mark 4: 12.

41. *When he saw his glory.* See Is. 6: 1—4. The remarkable manifestation which was made to Isaiah was a manifestation of Jehovah. John here speaks of it as being a manifestation of Christ. John seems to have been so much in the habit of contemplating the *divine* nature of our Lord, that he felt no difficulty in applying to Christ a description which originally referred to Jehovah; just as he felt no difficulty in ascribing to Christ the work of creation. Since Christ was in reality a partaker of the divine nature, the description furnished by Isaiah was truly a description of Christ. This language of John accords, also, with the opinion which has been held from very ancient times, that all the appearances of Jehovah mentioned in the Old Testament, were, in reality, manifestations of the Messiah in his divine nature.

42. *Confess;* openly acknowledge. See Matt. 10: 32. ‖ *Put out of the synagogue;* excommunicated. See on 9: 22.

44. *Jesus cried;* cried out, proclaimed. The particular occasion on which Jesus spoke the words which follow, is not mentioned Perhaps,

45 And he that seeth me, seeth him that sent me.

46 I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.

47 And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.

48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.

49 For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.

50 And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak.

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without referring to any one occasion, John intended to present a brief summary of our Lord's instructions.

45. *He that seeth me;* he that becomes acquainted with me.

46. *A light;* one who bestows knowledge and bliss, a Saviour. ‖ *Darkness;* ignorance and misery.

47. *I judge him not.* The word *judge* is here equivalent to the word *condemn*, or the phrase *adjudge to misery*. In this verse and the following, Jesus makes a distinction between himself and *the word*, that is, the instruction, which he had communicated. He says, It is not I that will cause a person's misery; his final doom cannot be ascribed to me as its procuring cause. ‖ *Not to judge;* not to condemn to misery. To make men miserable was no part of the Saviour's office. Whatever misery would result to men by occasion of his coming into the world, must not be imputed to *him* as a part of his *design*, but must be ascribed to the perverseness of men in slighting and rejecting him.

48. *Hath one that judgeth him.* The word *one* here does not relate to a person, but to the term *word*, which follows. The idea would be better expressed by the term *that*. The thought would then be expressed in a manner somewhat like the following: *Whoso rejecteth me, and receiveth not my instructions, hath that which will condemn him to misery.* These instructions, being disregarded, would inevitably be followed by an awful doom. The Saviour's teaching, if perverted or neglected, would be a savor of death unto death. Compare 2 Cor. 2 : 15, 16.

49. *Of myself;* by my own authority, independently of the Father. ‖ *A commandment;* a direction. Compare 8: 26, 28.

50. *His commandment is life everlasting;* the commission, or direction, which the Father gave me, was intended to secure men's eternal happiness. It was *salvation* then for which Jesus was sent into the world. The instructions which he imparted were in accordance with this design; but if they are rejected, they will issue in the condemnation of men.

Topics for Reflection. 1. The death of Jesus Christ was a part of the divine plan for the salvation of men. To the suffering of death Jesus voluntarily submitted. v. 24. Compare Luke 24 : 26. Acts 2 : 23. Rom. 5 : 8.

2. Great will be the glory and bliss of the Saviour's followers. v. 26. How cheerfully, then, ought we to choose Christ as our teacher and example!

3. Whatever sorrows we may be called to endure, and however we may shrink from the anticipation of sufferings, we ought to cherish a supreme regard to the glory of God. A solicitude to honor him will strengthen us for duties and for trials. vs. 27, 28.

CHAPTER XIII.

NOW before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.

2 And supper being ended, (the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, to betray him,)

4. While our privileges are continued, let us beware of neglecting them. v. 35. How dreadful the doom which must result from abusing them! v. 48. Compare Matt. 11 : 23.

5. Fear of human censure is exceedingly injurious to our best interests. v. 43. Compare Prov. 29 : 25. If we possess the approbation of God, how lightly ought we to estimate both the applause and the frown of man. Compare 1 Cor. 4 : 3.

CHAPTER XIII.

The evangelist, having furnished so many specimens of our Lord's public instructions, now, in several successive chapters, directs our attention to him in private with his disciples, preparing them for the last sad scenes of his earthly career, and for their subsequent duties.

1. *Before the feast of the passover.* The word *passover* sometimes refers specially to the supper when the paschal lamb was eaten; and at other times to the festival of seven days which followed the day of this supper, and which was called the festival of *unleavened bread.* In this latter sense, the word is here used. The supper which is mentioned in the following verses, was the paschal supper, when the lamb appointed by the law was eaten. This paschal supper was one day before the festival of unleavened bread. The law of Moses prescribed that the paschal lamb should be eaten on the fourteenth day of the first month [called Nisan] at even. See Lev. 23 : 5. The evening, according to the Jewish mode of reckoning, was not the end, but the beginning, of a day; so that the evening of the fourteenth day was the time immediately after sunset of the thirteenth, and the lamb was to be eaten on the evening which introduced the fourteenth day. The next evening, which commenced the fifteenth day, the festival of unleavened bread, or, as it came to be also called, the passover, commenced. See Lev. 23 : 6. The name *unleavened bread* came afterwards to be applied to the whole time; namely, the day of eating the lamb and the seven following days. Thus this supper, though it was, strictly speaking, the paschal, or passover supper, was really a day *before* the festival called the passover, or feast of unleavened bread. That it was the supper of the paschal lamb which Jesus was eating with his disciples, is plain from Matt. 26 : 2, 17—20, &c. It has sometimes been thought that the expression "*before* the feast of the passover," shows that Jesus ate the paschal supper on this occasion *before* the usual time. But the view above presented removes the difficulties which have been felt, and shows that the statement of John is in perfect agreement with those of the other evangelists. Compare Matt. 26 : 17. Mark 14 : 12. Luke 22 : 7. ‖ *His own;* the disciples, who were peculiarly his friends and objects of his regard. ‖ *Unto the end;* to the end of his life. He persevered in giving them proofs of his love.

2. *Supper being ended.* The word which is here translated *being ended*, is used in several places to signify not the *end*, but simply *the being*, or *the progress*, of an affair or an event. In Mark 6 : 2, the word translated *was come* is the same as is here employed; in Matt. 26 : 6, the word rendered *was* is the same. In the Greek of Matt. 13 : 21, is a similar instance. By the aid of this remark, we perceive that the phrase under consideration might have been translated

3 Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;

4 He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself.

5 After that, he poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the towel wherewith he was girded.

6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter.

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands and *my* head.

10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save

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while supper was going on, or *during supper*. This agrees with what is stated in the fourth verse — *He riseth from supper;* and in the twelfth verse, *he was set down again* [he had again reclined at the meal].

3. *All things into his hands.* Compare 17 : 2. Matt. 11 : 27.

6. *Dost thou wash my feet?* Peter objected, because the act seemed too low a service for his Master to perform. The washing of a guest's feet was a servant's work.

7. *Thou knowest not now;* thou dost not now understand the meaning of this act. ‖ *Hereafter;* by and by. Jesus was intending to explain this act, and to enforce the lesson he was thus emblematically teaching, as soon as he should have finished the washing.

8. *If I wash thee not.* Jesus immediately used the word *wash* in a metaphorical sense, as signifying inward, moral purifying. ‖ *Thou hast no part with me;* thou canst not be a partaker with me of the blessings of the divine government. Without the moral cleansing which proceeds from Jesus, Peter would be destitute of the favor of God and the final bliss of heaven.

9. *Not my feet only, but,* &c.; that is, wash me all over, from head to foot. The thought of being separated from his Master, and of not enjoying the bliss which he could bestow, was too painful to be endured. Peter, also, probably perceived the meaning of Jesus in respect to an inward purifying, and instantly expressed his wish to be cleansed throughout from moral defilement.

10. *He that is washed;* more strictly, according to the original, *a person that has been bathed.* The word in the original is a different one from the word translated *wash* in the preceding verses and in this same verse, and it signifies a *general washing*, or *bathing*. The other word is applied to a slight washing, as of the hands or feet. ‖ *Needeth not save to wash his feet;* has no need of an entire washing, or bathing; he needs only to wash his feet. ‖ *Clean every whit;* clean throughout. The bathing of a person would impart entire cleansing; but in coming to a friend's house, the feet would become soiled, and would therefore need to be washed anew. As sandals were worn, and the foot was often for the most part uncovered, it would be exposed to the dust; and, therefore, before the person took his place among the guests, it was necessary that his feet should be washed. By this illustration Jesus would convey to Peter

to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

11 For he knew who should betray him: therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?

13 Ye call me Master, and Lord: and ye say well; for *so* I am.

14 If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

18 I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen; but

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the thought, that his moral condition might be compared to the condition of a man who had been bathed, and who afterwards would need only the washing of his feet. The work of thorough moral purification, to which Peter's desire had reference, had already been performed, and Peter did not need that general cleansing. He did need, however, cleansing in regard to the daily moral defilement which he might contract. ‖ *Ye are clean;* ye have this general right state of moral feeling. ‖ *But not all.* There was one exception. This is mentioned in the next verse.

12. *Was set down again;* had reclined again at the supper. ‖ *Know ye?* do ye understand?

13. *Master and Lord;* Teacher and Master.

14, 15. *If I then,* &c. Jesus explained the design of the act which he had been performing. He wished to impress the minds of his disciples with the duty of condescension and benevolence. With such an example before them, they ought not to account any kind acts too mean for them to perform for each other; they ought cheerfully to render the lowest services which circumstances might require and which the spirit of love might dictate. This lesson our Lord enjoined on every proper occasion. Compare Matt. 18: 4, 5. 20: 20—28. 23: 10, 11. And, at the close of his life, he wished to make an indelible impression respecting it on the disciples' minds. According to Luke's account of this last supper, the disciples were still indulging ambitious views, and still needed special instruction concerning mutual condescension and love. See Luke 22: 24—30.

It has sometimes been thought that our Lord meant to enjoin the *washing of feet* as a *religious ordinance* to be perpetually observed among his followers, as the Lord's supper is to be perpetually observed. But the apostles did not so understand the Saviour; and hence, in the Acts of the Apostles, in which book we so frequently meet with accounts of baptism and of the Lord's supper, we no where read of the washing of feet performed *as a religious ordinance.* This consideration unites with our Lord's explanation of the act in showing that he meant to inculcate the duty of mutual condescension and love.

16. *The servant is not greater,* &c. If the Master has condescended to perform such an act, surely the servant ought not to think it beneath him.

18. *Whom I have chosen;* whom I have selected as true friends, my real, chosen followers. ‖ *That the Scrip-*

that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me.

19 Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am *he*.

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.

21 When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily,

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ture might be fulfilled. It had been foretold in the Scripture that the Messiah would suffer and die. See Is. 53 : 2—9. As a circumstance leading to that result, he would be betrayed; and one who had been on intimate terms with him, was to be the means of his coming into the power of his adversaries. This thought our Lord expressed in the words of Ps. 41 : 9. ‖ *He that eateth bread with me;* he that has enjoyed my hospitality and been on terms of friendship with me. ‖ *Lifted up his heel;* to attack and injure me. The ungrateful, unprovoked conduct of a man who should rise up against one who had befriended him and admitted him to his table, would well illustrate the conduct of Judas in betraying his Master.

19. *Ye may believe that I am he;* that I am the Messiah. The treachery of Judas might naturally have a bad effect on the disciples, in suggesting the suspicion whether he had not discovered something that had destroyed his confidence in Jesus, and, therefore, whether they had not committed a mistake in following him as the Messiah. And when, in consequence of this treachery, Jesus should be taken by the Jews and put to death, their confidence would be put to a severe test, as they were not expecting such an event. But, amid these perplexities, if they should consider that Jesus foretold what was to take place, and foretold that one of their own number was to be the criminal instrument of such a result, they would perceive, in this knowledge of the future, an additional evidence of his being what he had claimed to be.

20. *He that receiveth*, &c. The connection of these words with the preceding is not very obvious. Perhaps our Lord spoke more at length, reminding the disciples of the greatness and solemnity of their office, and assuring them that, notwithstanding the sorrows through which he was to pass, and in which they were to participate, they would find friends who would give them a welcome reception, and that those who should receive them would be regarded as receiving him. Thus he mingled consolation with his predictions of evil, and kept constantly before their minds the thought that they were the *representatives of the Messiah*, while at the same time they ought to cherish the spirit which would make them willing, each to be the servant of all.

Reflections. 1. The betraying of Jesus might well be traced to the influence of Satan. It was truly a diabolical act. v. 2. But instead of cherishing indignation against the memory of Judas, let us, each, watch against the wiles of the adversary.

2. We cannot too highly estimate the spirit of mutual condescension and kindness. vs. 14, 15. Compare vs. 34, 35. 15 : 12.

3. We need both an entire purification of our moral natures, and cleansing from our daily sins. v. 10. Compare 1 John 1 : 7—9. Rev. 1 : 5. Have we been cleansed from the defilement of sin?

21. *Troubled in spirit;* enduring painful emotion. ‖ *Testified;* declared. ‖ *Shall betray;* will betray. See on Matt. 26 : 23.

verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.

22 Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake.

23 Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom, one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved.

24 Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake.

25 He then, lying on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?

26 Jesus answered, He it is to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped *it*. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave *it* to Judas Iscariot *the son* of Simon.

27 And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly.

28 Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him.

29 For some *of them* thought, because Judas had the bag, that

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22. *Doubting of whom he spake.* Hence, according to Matt. 26: 22, Mark 14: 19, they began to ask Jesus, one by one, Lord, is it I?

23. *Leaning on Jesus' bosom.* As the disciples, together with Jesus, were reclining at the meal (see Matt. 26: 7), the one who was next to Jesus would be reclining near his bosom. ‖ *One of his disciples.* This was John himself, who in a modest way suppresses his name. ‖ *Whom Jesus loved;* to whom Jesus was peculiarly attached.

25. *Lying on Jesus' breast.* Such was his position, that, by a slight turning of the head, he could in a very private manner, by a mere whisper, speak to Jesus. It was, doubtless, in this private way, that the question was put to Jesus and an answer given by him to John. The other disciples did not hear the answer.

26. *A sop;* a morsel, that is, of the bread. ‖ *Dipped it.* It was the practice at the paschal supper, for the head of the family, after having broken the bread into pieces, to dip it with the fingers into the dish containing the broth of the lamb, and to give a bit of bread to each person present. Judas's turn to receive the usual portion was probably the next one; or the giving of the morsel might have commenced with him on account of the position which he occupied at the table. While the giving of the morsel would show to John which one of the company was the traitor, the other disciples would not discover beforehand who it was that was about to commit the foul deed, as Jesus did not depart from the ordinary course of proceeding in distributing the bread. Thus Jesus exercised the utmost kindness throughout this trying scene.

27. *Satan entered into him.* A way of expressing the thought, that Satan instigated him; and that his heart now became emboldened to consummate his treachery. Compare v. 2.

28. *No man at the table knew, &c.* John himself knew; but as he was the writer of this account, he spoke only of the others. They did not hear what Jesus had told John, nor had John an opportunity, nor probably an inclination, to make known the traitor's name. It would be, alas! sufficiently soon revealed. Judas knew what Jesus meant; and it was, perhaps, just before the Saviour's remark in v. 27, that Judas put the inquiry, Is it I? See Matt. 26: 25. Judas might have been near to Jesus, and have received the Saviour's answer without its being heard by the others. Perceiving that Jesus knew what he had done, and what was about to take place, he instantly withdrew.

29. *Judas had the bag.* See on

Jesus had said unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.

30 He then, having received the sop, went immediately out: and it was night.

31 Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.

32 If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.

33 Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me; and, as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come, so now I say to you.

34 A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

12:6. ‖ *Against the feast;* for the festival which was just commencing, and would continue seven days from the next evening.

31. *Now is the Son of man glorified.* Jesus knew that his death was just at hand; and though to human view an ignominious death, yet it would issue greatly to the glory of himself and of his Father. It would be followed by a triumphant rising from the dead, by an ascension to the right hand of God, and by the extension and prevalence of his religion. Thus Jesus, by means of death, would be rendered illustrious. ‖ *God is glorified.* The wisdom, and benevolence, and power of God, would become conspicuous by the events which would follow the death of Jesus, and by that death as procuring pardon and eternal life for men. ‖ *In him;* by means of him.

32. *Glorify him in himself;* make Christ himself glorious, as the agent in establishing the scheme of redemption, by elevating him to the dignity and happiness which would follow his ascension to heaven. Compare Phil. 2:8—11.

33. *Little children.* A phrase expressing endearment, equivalent to *my dearest friends, my beloved.* ‖ *Ye shall seek me;* ye will anxiously desire my presence and aid. ‖ *So now I say to you.* Jesus intended to convey to his disciples the thought that he was about to be removed from them by death. The remark which he repeated to them, he had formerly (8:21) made to the Jews. It was used, however, here in a somewhat different sense. He meant, that the disciples could *not yet* follow him, as it was proper that they should still remain on earth in order to effect his merciful designs. Compare 14:3. The Jews to whom he had before made this remark, could not go where he would be, on account of their sinful character. But these disciples Jesus acknowledged as his beloved followers, whom he would, *in due time*, receive to himself.

34. *A new commandment I give unto you.* This injunction of ardent mutual love had respect to the disciples as the followers of Jesus, separate both from the Gentiles and from the great body of the Jews. It was a *Christian* injunction, having respect to the new religion; an injunction, not particularly made before, though the principle from which it would grow had existed before. It was additional to all the obligations heretofore imposed, and was designed for cherishing mutual Christian love. It was *new*, then, as pertaining to a new community and to relations which did not exist before the coming of Christ. The occasion for its being enforced had but recently arisen, for it was only of late that the new religion had been introduced. This command had special respect, also, to the apostles, and was specially

35 By this shall all *men* know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

36 Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterward.

37 Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake.

38 Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

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needed by them. They had been cherishing ambitious views respecting the chief offices in the new kingdom. Jesus had repeatedly corrected this spirit, and enjoined on them humility and mutual service; he had also just given an example of lowliness and love in washing their feet. Now he again commands, that, banishing ambition, or the desire to rise one above another, they should cherish mutual love as a distinguishing trait of his disciples. To them as his apostles, it was a new commandment, superadded to all the injunctions in the Old Testament respecting mutual love. At the same time, it was a command which in its spirit would embrace all the followers of Christ, as such. ‖ *As I have loved you*, &c. Jesus proposed his own example as a rule and an encouragement. The mutual affection of his apostles and of all his followers, ought to be like his for them, making them deeply interested in one another's welfare, and willing to endure personal privations of any kind, and to any extent, for the sake of others. Compare 15: 12, 13.

35. *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples*, &c. Mutual love peculiarly characterized the early Christians. It was a common expression among the heathen — "See how these Christians love one another, and how they are ready to die for each other!" A heathen writer, in a scoffing manner, remarked of Christians, "Their lawgiver persuaded them that they are all brethren." Another said, "They love each other even before they are acquainted."

36. *Whither goest thou?* As Jesus had not expressly said that he was about to die, the disciples did not thoroughly apprehend his meaning. They thought of his being removed from them in some way, but exactly what he meant they knew not.

37. *I will lay down my life.* Peter supposed that Jesus was anticipating danger, but that, by the exertions of his disciples, he might be rescued from the danger. With his characteristic ardor, he generously, though ignorantly, offered to undergo any trouble rather than to be separated from his Master, or than to see his Master violently treated. Compare Matt. 26: 33. Luke 22: 33.

38. *The cock shall not crow*, &c. Compare Matt. 26: 34.

CHAPTER XIV.

The closing remarks of the preceding chapter (vs. 31—38) naturally excited gloom among the disciples. Jesus proceeded to present to them such consoling and encouraging thoughts as their circumstances required. In a very few hours, he was to be taken, and condemned, and crucified. They would need consolation; and more appropriate promises and cautions could not be made than are found in this chapter and the two following ones. He encouraged them to place unwavering and unlimited confidence in him; gave them assurances of bliss in heaven, of answers to their prayers, of the Holy Spirit's aid, of success in their labors, of his spiritual presence with them, and of his general blessing.

CHAPTER XIV.

LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

7 If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him.

8 Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.

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1. *Ye believe in God;* or, *believe ye in God.* The idea expressed by the word *believe* is that of *trusting*, and the Saviour's thought may thus be conveyed — *Trust in God, trust also in me.*

2. *My Father's house;* that is, heaven. God is here represented as occupying a spacious palace, with ample accommodations for his friends. ‖ *Mansions;* apartments.

3. *I will come again;* namely, at the termination of their labors on earth.

4. *Whither I go.* The Saviour was going to heaven, to his Father. ‖ *The way;* the course to be pursued, in order to arrive at heaven. Life is a journey: the path of holy love and obedience to Christ, conducts to heaven.

5. *Whither thou goest.* Thomas did not understand the remark of Jesus; he thought that his Master was about to retire to some place on earth.

6. Jesus spoke again of going, not to some place of security on earth, but *to the Father*, in heaven, and briefly explained to Thomas how one could arrive at heaven. *I am the way;* that is, to the Father. As a road conducts a person to a particular place, so, by means of me, a person can go to God — I am the medium of access to God. It is by being my disciples, and obeying my instructions, that men can attain to heaven. ‖ *The truth;* that is, I am the author of those true doctrines which rightly exhibit the plan of God for the salvation of men; through me, as the teacher from God, is communicated the truth, obedience to which leads to heaven. ‖ *The life;* the giver of spiritual life to the souls of men. Not only must the path to heaven be opened by the Mediator, but, in order to walk in that path, men must be taught the truth respecting God and heaven, and must become spiritually alive to God. It is through Jesus that spiritual life is imparted to the souls of men, so that they obey God, and walk in the way of holiness to heaven. See 6: 35, 48, 50, 51, 57.

Let us INQUIRE, 1. Do we trust in Christ as our mediator?

2. Do we heartily receive his instructions, as our great Teacher?

3. Do we possess spiritual life, so as to be obedient to his instructions?

7. *Ye should have known my Father also.* Between the Father and Christ there was a most intimate union, so that a knowledge of the one was also a knowledge of the other. Compare 5: 19, 23. ‖ *Have seen him;* are acquainted with him; have a knowledge of God himself, by having an acquaintance with me.

8. *Lord, show us the Father.* Phil-

9 Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Show us the Father?

10 Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.

11 Believe me that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake.

12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

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ip, in a childlike manner, not considering the spiritual, invisible nature of the Father, wished to see him with his bodily eyes.

9. *He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.* So intimate was the union of Christ with the Father, that he was a perfect representative of him. Compare Heb. 1: 3.

10. *I am in the Father, &c.* A more direct way of expressing intimate union between the Father and Christ. ‖ *The words;* the instructions. ‖ *Not of myself;* not by my own authority, independently of the Father. ‖ *The works.* This term has respect here to all the actions of Jesus, his teaching, his performing of miracles, and his labors in general for the salvation of men. In his whole course of action, his teaching, as well as his miracles, there was a manifestation of God's presence and power.

11. *Believe me;* believe my declarations. ‖ *For the very works' sake.* If the declarations of Jesus were not sufficient to secure a full assent, yet his deeds, the actions of his whole life, would warrant and demand their confidence in him. Those deeds proved Christ to be what he declared he was, one in whom God dwelt, and by whom God was manifesting himself among men.

12. To encourage their confidence in him, Jesus assured his disciples that distinguished honor would be bestowed on those who should adhere to him with unwavering faith. *The works that I do;* a course of action similar to that in which I am engaged, having for its object the salvation of men. ‖ *Greater works.* The results which would flow from the labors of his disciples would be greater and more striking than those which he himself had produced. They would be signally blessed in carrying forward the work which he had commenced, and the visible fruits of their labors would be greater and more numerous. He laid the foundation; they were to erect the superstructure. ‖ *Because I go unto my Father.* After Jesus should have gone to the Father, the Holy Spirit would be sent forth, and, by his influences on the souls of men, the labors of the apostles, and of other believers in Jesus, would become eminently successful. The triumph of his cause was, for the present, deferred. It would be more appropriate to that period when Jesus should be elevated to his glorious distinction as Head over all things. See Mark 16: 19. Eph. 1: 22.

13. *In my name;* as my apostles, acknowledging my authority, and laboring to advance my cause. Whatever would be necessary to the apostles, in the discharge of their work, they were encouraged to expect in answer to prayer. ‖ *Glorified in the Son;* by means of the Son. The cause of Christ was indissolubly connected with the glory of God. Noth-

14 If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*.

15 If ye love me, keep my commandments:

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever;

17 *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

19 Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

20 At that day ye shall know that I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

21 He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me, shall be loved of

ing, therefore, necessary for the performance of their work, would be withholden from the apostles.

14. *Any thing*. The Saviour had reference, clearly, to *any thing* that was necessary for the successful prosecution of *their work*. He repeated the assurance contained in the preceding verse, so as to excite unwavering confidence in his faithfulness.

16. *Comforter*. The office of him who is here called a *Comforter* included *instruction* and *guidance* respecting Christian truth, as well as *consolation*. Compare v. 26 and 16: 13, 14. He was to be a *Helper* to them in a most extensive sense, as Christ had been. ‖ *Abide with you forever*. Christ's abiding with his followers was a temporary one. That of the Holy Spirit was to be permanent; he would never leave them.

17. *The Spirit of truth;* the Spirit who should make known divine truth. ‖ *Seeth him not, neither knoweth him;* does not rightly conceive of him, nor of his designs, and therefore does not cordially welcome him. ‖ *Ye know him;* ye know his designs, and are rightly disposed towards him. The word *know* in the Bible frequently contains the additional idea of *approbation* and *love*. ‖ *Shall be in you;* as a teacher and guide. The Spirit would make known to the disciples the divine will, and so influence their hearts that they would cheerfully obey it.

18. *Comfortless;* like orphans, friendless, and destitute of proper guidance. ‖ *Come to you*. The Saviour would grant them his spiritual presence, though in body he would be absent from them. Compare Matt. 18: 20.

19. *Ye see me;* ye shall see me. Our Lord referred to what he had just mentioned, namely, his spiritual presence with the apostles. They would know that their Master, though unseen by mortal eyes, was still with them. ‖ *I live;* I live, and possess a life-giving and life-sustaining power. Compare 6: 35, 50, 51. ‖ *Ye shall live;* your spiritual life shall be sustained, and you shall be made truly happy here and hereafter. Though I am to depart from earth, yet my power will secure to you whatever your highest happiness requires.

20. *At that day;* in the time when I am removed from you, as to bodily presence. ‖ *Ye shall know that I am in the Father*. By the spiritual strength and bliss which you will then receive from me, you will be fully convinced that I am intimately united with the Father. If I were not united with the Father, I could not bestow such blessings. ‖ *Ye in me, and I in you;* between you and me there is an intimate union, I cherishing affection for you, and communicating to you blessings, and you receiving those blessings from me.

21. *Manifest myself;* spiritually. I will grant a sense of my presence and love.

my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

22 Judas saith unto him, (not Iscariot,) Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?

23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

24 He that loveth me not, keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.

25 These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present with you.

26 But the Comforter, *which is* the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

28 Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come *again* unto you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father: for my Father is greater than I.

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22. *Judas — not Iscariot.* See Luke 6: 16.

23. *Make our abode with him.* The idea is the same as is suggested in the preceding verse, with the additional thought of a *continued* enjoyment of God's presence and love. Compare Ps. 73: 23—28.

26. *In my name;* in my behalf, carrying forward my cause. ‖ *All things;* all things that would be necessary for the performance of their work. By the Spirit's influences, the apostles were to be imbued with full and accurate knowledge of the Messiah's religion, and to be fully qualified to teach and to maintain it.

27. *Peace I leave with you.* The word used among the Jews corresponding to *peace* was employed in their salutations and in taking leave of friends; thus, *Peace be to you;* and, *Go in peace.* It answered, when used at taking leave, to our word *farewell*, which, when understood according to its etymology, *may you* FARE WELL, is equivalent to supplicating a blessing. The Saviour, then, may be regarded as saying, I leave you a farewell, a blessing. He was just ready to finish his earthly course, and to be separated from his disciples, whom he had so tenderly loved. He bade them farewell. But not as friends on earth ordinarily used such an expression, would he now use it. He would use it in all its fulness of meaning. ‖ *My peace;* a farewell, a benediction, such as it is suitable for me to give, such as no one else can give. ‖ *Not as the world giveth.* Men use the *language* of blessing, but the blessing itself is beyond their power. Their professed wishes for another's good are powerless, and sometimes insincere. Not so with the Saviour's benediction on his disciples.

28. *How I said unto you.* See vs. 2, 3. ‖ *If ye loved me;* that is, as truly and earnestly as ye ought. ‖ *My Father is greater than I.* The Saviour here viewed himself as the agent or servant of the Father, engaged in a commission which was now about being completed. When his work should be finished, he was to return to the Father, to receive signal honor for himself (see Mark 16: 19),

29 And now I have told you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye might believe.

30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

31 But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence.

CHAPTER XV.

I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

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and to obtain the agency of the Holy Spirit for carrying into effect his merciful designs. A true and enlightened love to their Master, then, would have led the disciples to rejoice in his going to the Father; for such was the divine plan, and the success of the Saviour's cause required it, in order that the Father might send forth the Spirit. Compare vs. 16, 26. 15: 26. 16: 7—15.

29. *When it is come to pass, ye might believe.* By the Saviour's clearly predicting that he was about to go to the Father, the disciples would be convinced that the termination of his life did not happen at unawares. But by its happening in accordance with his prediction, they would perceive new evidence that he really came from God, and that he was fully acquainted with the plans of God.

30. *The prince of this world;* Satan, elsewhere called the god of this world (2 Cor. 4: 4), and the one who rules among the children of disobedience (Eph. 2: 2), that is, among the wicked. Compare 12: 31. ‖ *Cometh;* to assail me, and to defeat my righteous designs. ‖ *Hath nothing in me.* Satan would find in the Saviour nothing similar to himself. The expression here employed in the original is also significant of power, and may convey the idea, He has no power against me, he will not prevail against me.

31. *Even so I do.* The Saviour referred to what was just before him, namely, his being seized and put to death. Such an event was embraced in the divine plan, and in the charge which Jesus had received from the Father; and such was his love to the Father, and such his acquiescence in the Father's instructions, that he would promptly go forth to meet death in the appointed way. Thus would he give evidence to the world of his love to the Father, and of his obedience to the divine will. ‖ *Arise, let us go hence.* The conversation recorded in this chapter, was held at the table at which the passover supper and the newly-instituted Lord's supper had been taken. Jesus now proposed that all should arise and go forth from the house. It would seem, however, from the three following chapters, that the Saviour still lingered with his disciples, probably in the same room. Compare 18: 1. He had still much affectionate advice to give them; and the short time which remained before his being betrayed, he wished to employ in the most profitable manner. The company doubtless arose from the table, and while making preparation to depart, Jesus again drew their attention to himself, and protracted their stay in the house.

HINT. We cannot but notice the strong attachment of Jesus to his followers, his deep solicitude for their welfare, and the ample provision which he has made for their being guided to their heavenly home.

CHAPTER XV.

1. *I am the true vine.* Jesus and his disciples had just been partaking of the fruit of the vine. See Matt. 26: 27—29. This suggested to him a topic of conversation. He availed himself of the vine, as a source of instruction respecting the need of spiritual union to himself, in order that a person might enjoy true bliss, and be profitable in the service of God. Himself he represented as a vine

2 Every branch in me that
beareth not fruit, he taketh
away: and every *branch* that
beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that
it may bring forth more fruit.
3 Now ye are clean through
the word which I have spoken
unto you.
4 Abide in me, and I in you.
As the branch cannot bear fruit
of itself, except it abide in the
vine; no more can ye, except
ye abide in me.
5 I am the vine, ye *are* the
branches: He that abideth in
me, and I in him, the same
bringeth forth much fruit: for
without me ye can do nothing.
6 If a man abide not in me,
he is cast forth as a branch, and
is withered; and men gather
them, and cast *them* into the fire,
and they are burned.
7 If ye abide in me, and my
words abide in you, ye shall ask
what ye will, and it shall be done
unto you.
8 Herein is my Father glori-
fied, that ye bear much fruit; so
shall ye be my disciples.
9 As the Father hath loved
me, so have I loved you: con-
tinue ye in my love.
10 If ye keep my command-
ments, ye shall abide in my
love; even as I have kept my
Father's commandments, and
abide in his love.
11 These things have I spo-
ken unto you, that my joy might
remain in you, and *that* your
joy might be full.
12 This is my commandment,
That ye love one another, as I
have loved you.
13 Greater love hath no man
than this, that a man lay down
his life for his friends.
14 Ye are my friends, if ye
do whatsoever I command you.

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indeed, imparting nourishment and vigor to its branches. His disciples he represented as the branches. They must adhere to him, as their Lord, their teacher, their guide. Only by this adherence to him, can they be spiritually alive, and be truly profitable. If their adherence to him be merely nominal, not real and vital, they cannot enjoy the benefits which it is in his power to bestow.

2. *Purgeth;* pruneth, trimmeth.

3. *Ye are clean.* As the skilful vine-dresser cleanses the thrifty branch, that is, removes from it the impediments to its growth and fruitfulness, so ye are morally cleansed, and may be compared to branches pruned and fruitful. ‖ *Through the word;* instruction in religious truth.

5. *Without me;* apart from me. ‖ *Do nothing;* that is, in promoting my cause.

7. *Ye shall ask what ye will.* All the necessary endowments for the profitable discharge of their duty, the disciples would certainly receive in answer to prayer, if they adhered to Christ as the giver of spiritual life.

9. *Continue ye in my love.* The connection shows our Lord's meaning to have been, Continue to hold your place in my affections by a careful obedience to my commands. Live in such a manner that I may continue to love you.

11. *My joy might remain in you;* the joy which I feel in respect to you might be abiding. ‖ *Your joy;* the happiness which you experience from my favor.

12. *Love one another, as I have loved you;* sincerely and ardently, so as to be willing even to die for one another.

15 Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you.

16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

17 These things I command you, that ye love one another.

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

20 Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you: if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.

21 But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me.

22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloak for their sin.

23 He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.

24 If I had not done am*ong* them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen, and hated both me and my Father.

25 But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their

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15. *The servant knoweth not, &c.* The servant is not admitted to such affectionate intercourse with his master as to be made acquainted with his designs. ‖ *All things that I have heard of my Father;* the things which I have been commissioned by my Father to perform. I have given you information concerning the design for which I came into the world.

16. *Ye have not chosen me;* it is not you that first chose me as your Master, but it is I who first chose you to be my disciples. ‖ *Ordained;* appointed. ‖ *In my name;* as my disciples, and from a regard to my purposes. Compare 14: 13, 14.

19. *His own;* that which belongs to the world, that which is like the world.

20. *The word that I said unto you.* See 13: 16. Compare Matt. 10: 24.

21. *Know.* See on 14: 17.

22. *They had not had sin;* that is, comparatively speaking. So greatly is their guilt increased by their rejection of me, that, had they never heard of me, they would have been comparatively free from guilt. Guilt is proportioned, of course, to the advantages possessed and abused. Compare Luke 12: 48. ‖ *No cloak;* no adequate excuse.

23. *He that hateth me, hateth my Father also.* Hence, how great and inexcusable is the guilt of rejecting Jesus Christ!

25. *But this cometh to pass, that the word might be fulfilled, &c.* The hatred which was cherished against Jesus was remarkably coincident with a passage in the Jewish Scriptures; and that passage might be considered

.aw, They hated me without a cause.

26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.

27 And ye also shall bear witness, because ye have been with me from the beginning.

CHAPTER XVI.

THESE things have I spoken unto you, that ye should not be offended.

as proved true in the conduct of the Jews towards Jesus. A pious man of former times had reason to speak of the wicked as hating him without a cause. And in the case of Jesus, this language was abundantly verified. Such coincidences between the language of the Old Testament and events in the life of Jesus, whether the passages referred to were direct prophecies or not, would naturally strike the mind as indicating the providence of God both in that language and in those events; and thus the disciples would become justly confirmed in the belief that those events occurred according to a divine plan, and that Jesus, in respect to whom their Scriptures were verified in so many ways, was truly the One whom the Father was to send. ‖ *In their law;* in their Scriptures. Compare 10 : 34. See Ps. 109 : 3. 69 : 4.

26. *He shall testify of me;* he shall bear witness to my integrity. Though I am rejected by my adversaries, yet the Holy Spirit will vindicate me, and bring clearly to light the truth respecting me.

27. *Ye also shall bear witness;* that is, to my integrity. ‖ *Because ye have been with me from the beginning.* Jesus had spoken and acted without reserve in the presence of his apostles. Thus they were qualified by intimate personal acquaintance to bear witness respecting his private life, as well as his public teaching. The most rigid scrutiny of his retired moments, as well as of his public life, would end most honorably to himself. Even Judas was compelled to acknowledge, I have betrayed innocent blood. See Matt. 27 : 4. Compare Heb. 7 : 26.

TOPICS FOR INQUIRY. 1. Are we sensible of our dependence on Christ? and are we cultivating an intimate intercourse with him? vs. 2, 5.

2. Are we bearing much fruit for the glory of God? v. 8. In respect to this inquiry, consider what is the habitual frame of your mind, at home as well as abroad, during the week as well as on the Sabbath, in the ordinary pursuits of business as well as in acts of worship, among men of the world as well as among the professed followers of Christ; what are you doing for the salvation of men; what impression are you making on others respecting religion; what efforts are you making for improvement in personal piety.

3. Do we possess a special love for the people of God? v. 12.

4. Are we willing, through our love to Christ, to meet the frowns and hatred of men who love not the Saviour? vs. 18, 19.

How consoling is the reflection, if we are enduring hatred on account of our attachment to religion, that, in this respect, we are treated as our Saviour was! vs. 18—20. Nor will he permit us to suffer for his name beyond the ability which he will grant us to endure evils. Compare 1 Cor. 10 : 13.

CHAPTER XVI.

1. *Offended;* induced to commit offence by departing from me. Compare Matt. 13 : 21. The Saviour had predicted his own death, and the hatred to which his apostles would be exposed. When, then, he should be removed from them, and they should be suffering persecution, they ought not to feel disappointed, but still to hold fast their attachment to him.

2 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you, will think that he doeth God service.

3 And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me.

4 But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. And these things I said not unto you at the beginning, because I was with you.

5 But now I go my way to him that sent me, and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?

6 But because I have said these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.

7 Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:

9 Of sin, because they believe not on me;

10 Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;

11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

13 Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he

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2. *Put you out of the synagogues.* See on 9: 22.

3. *Known the Father.* See on 14: 17.

4. *Because I was with you.* At an early period of the disciples' connection with Jesus, there was no need that he should fully disclose the scenes of trial through which they were to pass. It was more appropriate to that period that they should rejoice in their privileges, and should be receiving religious instruction. Besides, if troubles should arise while he was with them, he could personally advise and protect.

5. *None of you asketh me, Whither goest thou?* At an early part of this conversation, Thomas had made a remark similar to the inquiry here stated. See 14: 5. But Jesus was here speaking of the precise moment then passing.

8. *Reprove;* convince. ‖ *Of sin, and of righteousness,* &c. Our Lord proceeded immediately to explain these terms.

9. *Of sin, because they believe not,* &c. The Spirit will convince my adversaries that they have sinned in not receiving me as the Messiah.

10. *Of righteousness;* of my innocence and holiness. The Spirit will convince them that I am a righteous person, and that I deserved better treatment. ‖ *Because I go to the Father.* I am going to the Father; I shall be seated at his right hand. Mark 16: 19. He will give glorious success to my cause, and thus furnish a divine attestation to my righteousness.

11. *Of judgment, because the prince of this world,* &c. He will convince men of the just sentence passed on Satan; for Satan's efforts will be foiled, and he will be perceived to be in a state of condemnation.

12. *Ye cannot bear them now.* The apostles still needed to be led along gradually to those more elevated truths which would, in due time, be disclosed to them.

13. *Into all truth;* all the truths of

shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* unto you.

15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall show *it* unto you.

16 A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.

17 Then said *some* of his disciples among themselves, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and, Because I go to the Father?

18 They said therefore, What is this that he saith, A little while? We cannot tell what he saith.

19 Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

20 Verily, verily, I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice: and ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned unto joy.

21 A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

22 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.

23 And in that day ye shall

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the gospel. The Spirit was to unfold to the disciples *the whole truth;* they were not yet in a condition suitable for receiving it. ‖ *He shall not speak of himself;* that is, by his own authority, as independent of me and of the Father. ‖ *Whatsoever he shall hear;* that is, from the Father; what he shall receive in order to communicate to you. Compare 15: 15. Thus there would be a perfect harmony between the instructions which Jesus had given, and the more full disclosures to be made by the Spirit. The Spirit was to complete, in the work of instruction, what Jesus had commenced.

16. *Again a little while, and ye shall see me.* Jesus here referred to his being spiritually with his disciples after his removal from the earth, and to their final reception to himself in heaven. See 14: 18, 19, 2, 3. Though years would elapse before they should be called to heaven, yet, comparatively speaking, the time would be "a little while."

18. *We cannot tell;* we do not understand.

21. *A man;* a human being.

22. *I will see you again.* This language would be applicable to the Saviour's being with the disciples on earth after his resurrection; but his promise was only partially fulfilled by that period of intercourse with them. It was his spiritual presence that was principally intended, since he intimates that their joy would not be interrupted.

23. *In that day;* at that time when, after my removal from the earth, I shall yet manifest myself spiritually to you. ‖ *Ye shall ask me noth-*

ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give *it* you.

24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

25 These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs: but the time cometh when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.

26 At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

27 For the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God.

28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

29 His disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no proverb.

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ing. At that time, they would have no occasion to make inquiries as to the meaning of what Jesus had just told them. They were now in perplexity, not understanding him, and they wished to ask him a question (v. 19); but hereafter, when enjoying his spiritual presence, they would not have occasion to make such inquiries. This thought led the Saviour to repeat his encouragement respecting answers to prayer, and to promise again that all their necessities should be supplied in answer to prayer *in his name*, that is, prayer offered by them *as his disciples*, devoted to *his interests*, and acting under *his authority*.

24. *Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name*. Hitherto they had offered supplications, not specially *as followers of Jesus*, and *in his behalf*, as having reference to *his* glory; but hereafter they were to pray *in behalf of the cause of Jesus*; they were to come to the Father as *the followers of Jesus*, and in that distinctive capacity to seek for blessings.

25. *These things*; those things which the Saviour had communicated in the present conversation. ‖ *Proverbs*. Proverbial sayings are frequently encompassed with obscurity, so that their meaning is not immediately obvious. Hence, *to speak in proverbs* means *to speak somewhat obscurely*. The disciples did not, accordingly, during this conversation, immediately perceive the meaning of the Saviour. See 14:5, 8. 16:17. ‖ *The time cometh*; namely, when the Spirit of truth should be sent. ‖ *I shall speak*; I, by the agency of the Spirit.

26, 27. *I say not unto you that I will pray the Father for you: For the Father*, &c. The Saviour wished to give his disciples a very strong and encouraging assurance that the Father would answer their prayers, and bestow on them every needed good. Hence he declared that so favorably inclined towards them was the Father, so ready to perceive and to supply their wants, that there would be no occasion for him, the Saviour, to interpose his kind offices in interceding for them. So well pleased was the Father with their love to their Master, and with their confidence in him, as having come from God, that he needed no additional inducement to hear and answer their prayers. How consoling must such an assurance have been to the timid, despondding disciples! With what strength must the remembrance of it have nerved them after the descent of the Holy Spirit, and their becoming fully qualified for their high and holy work!

30 Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.

31 Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe?

32 Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

CHAPTER XVII.

THESE words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee:

2 As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.

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30. *Thou knowest all things.* The disciples had been desirous to make an inquiry (vs. 17, 19); but Jesus, without waiting for them to propose it, had anticipated them, and made such explanations as appeared to them satisfactory. His knowledge of their desires confirmed their belief in him: another proof, in addition to what they had already received, was now furnished them, that their Master had really come from God, and was clothed with divine authority.

32. *To his own;* to his own abode. The Saviour referred to the disciples' leaving of him when he should be seized by the Jews, and to their retiring either to their homes, or to places of temporary accommodation in and around Jerusalem.

33. *In me;* by adhering to me as your Master. ‖ *In the world;* by the hostility of a wicked world; from the men of the world.

REMARKS. 1. Let us highly prize the influences of the Holy Spirit. To the apostles the Holy Spirit made *special revelations;* to all men his influences are necessary for so enlightening and affecting the soul as to secure salvation. vs. 13—15. Compare 2 Cor. 4: 6.

2. If we are truly followers of Christ, all the sorrows through which we are called to pass will have a happy issue. v. 20. Compare Rom. 8: 28. Rev. 7: 14.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Saviour, having finished his conversation with the disciples, offered a most affectionate and fervent prayer. In this prayer, he briefly noticed his manner of performing the work which had been committed to him, and commended his disciples to the merciful care of his Father, beseeching also divine favor for those who, in subsequent times, should believe in him.

1. *The hour is come;* the hour of my departure from this world. ‖ *Glorify thy Son;* receive thy Son to the glorious condition in heaven which has been appointed for him. Compare Mark 16: 19. Phil. 2: 9—11. ‖ *That thy Son also may glorify thee.* The Father would be greatly honored by the extension of the gospel, and the success which was to attend it, when, after the ascension of Jesus, the Spirit should be sent into the world.

2. *All flesh;* all mankind. It was in behalf of human beings that Jesus came into the world, and to him pertains dominion over the human race. ‖ *To as many as thou hast given him,* to those who have been specially given to Christ, to be his redeemed peo-

3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

4 I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.

5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

6 I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

7 Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee:

8 For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me: and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

9 I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

10 And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them.

11 And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are*.

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ple, and to be admitted into heaven. Compare 6 : 37, 39.

3. *This is life eternal, that they might know thee.* Eternal life is connected with a right knowledge of the Father — a knowledge of him which not only recognizes his real character and designs, but which is also accompanied with *approbation* and *love*. See on 14 : 17. ‖ *The only true God.* Jehovah is thus called in distinction from all false gods. ‖ *And Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.* There is no true system of religion but that of Jesus Christ. Hence a knowledge of Jesus Christ — such a knowledge as is combined with love to him, and with obedience to him — conducts to eternal life. Jesus here spoke of himself as *the Messiah*, sent forth to become the Redeemer of men.

4. *I have glorified thee.* The instruction which Jesus gave concerning the character of God, the plan of salvation, and the divine purposes respecting men, was highly honorable to God. The whole course of Jesus bore most directly and happily on the glory of God. ‖ *I have finished the work.* Jesus was so near the close of life, and was so conscious of holding himself ready for the remaining sufferings, that he spoke of himself, by anticipation, as having performed all his work. His active labors were indeed completed; all that remained was, to yield himself up to death.

5. *With thine own self;* in thine own presence. ‖ *Before the world was.* Compare 1 : 1, 2.

6. *I have manifested thy name.* I have made thee known. ‖ *Unto the men which, &c.*; the apostles. ‖ *Thine they were;* by thy special love to them, and by their love to thee.

8. *The words which thou gavest me;* the instruction which I was commissioned to impart. Compare 7 : 16, 17. 8 : 28.

9. *I pray not for the world.* The petitions which Jesus was offering on this occasion were particularly for his apostles. On other occasions, he prayed also for the ungodly. See Luke 23 : 34. Compare Is. 53 : 12.

10. *I am glorified in them.* They had honored Jesus by acknowledging and obeying him as their Master.

11. *Keep through thine own name;* in thine own name. The Saviour

12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.

prayed that his disciples might be preserved in the knowledge and love of God. ‖ *That they may be one;* that they may be united together in the knowledge and love of thyself, and in the support of thy truth.

12. *I kept them in thy name;* I preserved them in the knowledge and love of thyself, through my teaching and care. ‖ *The son of perdition.* In the scriptural manner of speaking, this phrase means *a person worthy of perdition,* and *one doomed to perdition;* one whose character makes him a fit subject for God's special disapprobation, and who is therefore doomed to be lost. Our Lord here referred to Judas Iscariot, who had betrayed him, and who had been known to himself as a faithless follower, whose utter destitution of love to him, and whose covetous disposition (compare 12: 4—6), had at length issued in the foul act of betraying his Master, and who was soon about to designate him to his enemies by a kiss. It may be thought that Jesus here acknowledged Judas as one of those who had been given to him by the Father, and to whom he was to give eternal life. Compare v. 2. But a comparison, especially in the original, of *the manner* of speaking in this passage with the manner of speaking in Luke 4: 26, 27, shows that our Lord did not here acknowledge Judas as one that had been given to him by the Father. In the passage of Luke, the terms in the original translated *save* and *saving* are the same as are here translated *but.* And as, in the passage of Luke, an obvious distinction is made between the widows *in Israel* and the widow *of Sidon, not* belonging to Israel; and between the lepers *in Israel* and Naaman a *Syrian* leper; so our Lord's language here makes a distinction between *those who had been given to him* and *the son of perdition.* As the *Sidonian* widow was not an *Israelitish* widow, and as the *Syrian* leper was not an *Israelitish* leper, so the son of perdition was not one of those who had been given to Christ. The real sense of this clause is exhibited by placing the emphasis on the word *them,* and supplying the verb to which the word *son* relates: thus, Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of *them* is lost; but the son of perdition is lost. Compare also 18: 9. ‖ *That the scripture might be fulfilled.* The Scriptures had foretold that the Messiah was to suffer and to die, and this was fulfilled by the traitorous conduct of Judas. In the conduct which sealed his doom, Judas was not actuated by *a design* on his part to fulfil the Scripture, but by a malicious disposition. The voluntary exercise of this disposition was a leading means by which the death of Christ was to be effected. Thus the conduct of Judas was in accordance with scriptural predictions, and resulted in giving fulfilment to those predictions. In his conduct there was also a verifying of what had been written in Ps. 41: 9; so that his conduct might well be regarded as *a filling out* of that passage. The conduct of Judas is not hereby excused. It is simply declared to have been in accordance with what had long before been written by inspired men. But the predicting of wickedness furnishes no apology for that wickedness; and the resemblance between criminal conduct at one time and a known account of criminal conduct at a former time, so far from diminishing, rather heightens the guilt of a transgressor. The conduct of Judas was not only wrong in itself, but its guilt was increased by his knowledge of the Scriptures, which had exposed the baseness of a man that had violated friendship and confidence.

13 And now come I to thee, and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves.

14 I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

15 I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.

19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.

20 Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through their word:

21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be

13. *In the world;* while I am on earth. ‖ *My joy;* the happiness which they have received from me. ‖ *Fulfilled;* rendered complete. During the conversation preceding this prayer, Jesus had given such assurances to the apostles as were suited to deliver them from all fear.

15. *From the evil;* either the evil one, Satan, or from evil in general.

17. *Sanctify them.* The word *sanctify* signifies not only *to make holy*, but also *to consecrate*, *to devote;* and sometimes both of these meanings seem to be combined. As the apostles had been called out from the world for the performance of peculiar and holy duties, it was necessary that they should be *holy* men and *devoted* to those duties. ‖ *Through thy truth: thy word*, &c. The instructions which God had imparted through the Saviour were fitted to promote the *holiness* of the apostles, and consequently their *devotion* to their work.

18. *Even so have I also sent them*, &c. The fact that the apostles were going forth as his agents, as he himself had been the agent of the Father, was another reason why the Saviour desired that they should be made truly holy.

19. *I sanctify myself.* The Saviour spoke of himself as one who was *separate from the world*, and who was voluntarily and wholly *devoted to God* for the work of redeeming sinners. In this work are included both his devoting himself to *making known the will of God* and his devoting himself *to death* for the salvation of men. In both these senses, he had consecrated himself to God; he had occupied himself in teaching the will of God, and he was holding himself ready to suffer death on the cross. It was also for *the apostles' sakes* that he had thus consecrated himself; both for their salvation and for furnishing them an example in the office which they were to sustain. ‖ *That they might be sanctified through the truth;* that they might be made holy and devoted to God in the work to which he had called them.

20. *But for them also*, &c. The Saviour extended his view through all coming time, and embraced in his intercession, not only the apostles, but also all who should become his followers.

21. *May be one;* may be united together in knowledge and love. ‖ *One in us;* one with us. Between the Father and the Son there is a complete union in respect to their views and feelings. So the Saviour desired that all his followers might be united as to their views and affections, being united in love to the Father, and to the Son, and to one another; and holding fast the truths which were

one in us: that the world may
believe that thou hast sent me.
22 And the glory which thou
gavest me, I have given them;
that they may be one, even as
we are one;
23 I in them, and thou in me,
that they may be made perfect
in one; and that the world may
know that thou hast sent me,
and hast loved them as thou
hast loved me.
24 Father, I will that they
also whom thou hast given me
be with me where I am; that
they may behold my glory which
thou hast given me: for thou
lovedst me before the foundation
of the world.
25 O righteous Father, the
world hath not known thee: but
I have known thee, and these
have known that thou hast sent
me.
26 And I have declared unto
them thy name, and will declare
it: that the love wherewith thou
hast loved me, may be in them,
and I in them.

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loved by the Father and the Son. ‖ *That the world may believe, &c.* The affectionate union which the Saviour desired among his followers, would be a convincing proof of the truth of his religion and of his claim to have been sent from God. And such has been the effect. The ardent, mutual love of real Christians has been regarded as a proof of the truth and power of their religion. Nothing else has power to produce such a union of hearts. Notwithstanding the diversities of opinion on various subjects which have divided Christians, there will, where there is true religion, be strong mutual affection. Love to Christ is a common bond, a love which proves itself superior to all earthly allurements. Compare 13: 35.

22. *And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them;* that is, by promise. I have given to them a participation in the glorious state which thou hast appointed for me. Compare Luke 22: 29, 30. Matt. 19: 28. Jesus was speaking also of those who should become his followers. Hence he had reference, likewise, to the glorious state to which all believers will be received in heaven. Compare Matt. 13: 43. ‖ *That they may be one;* that is, united to me, as the next verse expresses.

23. *I in them;* that I may be in them, that between them and me there may be a complete union in mind and heart. ‖ *And thou in me;* that is, *as* thou art in me; as between thee and me there is a complete union of sentiment and affection. ‖ *That they may be made perfect in one;* that they may be completely united together, by being united to us.

24. *I will;* I desire. Jesus, having mentioned that he had purposed to admit his followers to a participation of the glorious state which awaited him in heaven, presented it as a distinct wish of his, that such should be the case. ‖ *Be with me;* in heaven. ‖ *Where I am;* where I shall be. ‖ *My glory;* the glorious condition to which I shall be exalted. ‖ *Before the foundation of the world.* Compare v. 5.

26. *And will declare it;* will still further make it known by the agency of the Holy Spirit. Compare 16: 8—14. ‖ *That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them;* may be cherished *towards* them; that they may share in the love which thou hast bestowed on me. This would be a consequence of their receiving increased knowledge of the Father, and of being influenced by that knowledge to a stronger affection and confidence towards the Saviour. ‖ *And I in them;* and that I may be united to them, by their increase of knowledge and love respecting the Father,

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHEN Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples.

2 And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftimes resorted thither with his disciples.

3 Judas then, having received a band *of men* and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees,

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and thus coming nearer and nearer to my state of knowledge and love.

This union with his disciples, the Saviour seems to have contemplated with peculiar fondness. And how interesting is the thought, and how dignified the privilege, to a follower of Christ, of being thus united to his Lord in sentiment and affection here, and in glory hereafter! Do WE FEEL this to be a privilege, and are we aspiring more and more after it?

REMARKS. 1. It is a cheering thought, that if we are truly Christians, the Lord Jesus Christ, in one of the most interesting hours of his life, offered special prayer for us. vs. 9, 20.

2. The deep solicitude which Jesus felt for his apostles, was not a fruitless solicitude; it was effectual in securing their usefulness, their spiritual happiness, and their salvation. His solicitude for others will also be availing for every one who commits his soul to him.

3. Let us cherish true holiness and consecration to God, as our primary duty, and as the regulating principle of our whole conduct. vs. 15—17.

4. The *truths of the Bible* ought to be engraven on our souls, as the means of increasing our knowledge of God, our piety, and our happiness. v. 17. It is by receiving the truths of Christianity, that holiness will be promoted in our souls.

5. How strong an inducement to holiness and devotedness to God ought the example of Jesus to be! v. 19. We ought to walk in his steps. Compare 1 Pet. 2: 21—23.

6. The spirit of Christian love and union — let us cherish it as a bright ornament of true religion. However we may differ from many of our fellow Christians in various opinions and practices, let not the flame of true love to Christ's followers burn dimly. They with us are united to Christ, and we hope to form together one perfectly harmonious, and holy, and happy community in heaven. vs. 21—23.

7. The union of heart which exists among Christians, is a strong proof of the divine origin of their religion. Such is the natural selfishness of the human heart, and so numerous are the conflicting interests of men, that a religion which is so opposed to the natural bent of the heart, and which proves itself superior to all the inward and outward causes of self-preference and of disunion, cannot be reasonably traced to any other than a divine source. vs. 21, 23.

8. The followers of Christ will at length be with him in heaven. The sight of our glorified Redeemer — the assurance of his everlasting love — and our consciousness of being like him — these things will render heaven a blessed abode indeed; and the anticipation of such bliss may well strengthen us for all the duties and all the trials incident to a Christian life.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. *The brook Cedron.* This was a stream flowing through the valley east of Jerusalem, between the city and the mount of Olives. It emptied into the Dead Sea. It has but little water, except in the rainy season. The same stream is mentioned in 2 Kings 23: 6, 12. ‖ *A garden.* This garden was probably a part of the farm called Gethsemane. See Matt. 26: 36.

3. *A band of men.* The temple was

cometh thither with lanterns, and torches, and weapons.

4 Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye?

5 They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them.

6 As soon then as he had said unto them, I am *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

7 Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.

8 Jesus answered, I have told you that I am *he*. If therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:

9 That the saying might be fulfilled which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me, have I lost none.

10 Then Simon Peter, having a sword, drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus.

11 Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?

12 Then the band, and the captain, and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him,

13 And led him away to Annas first, (for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas, which was the high priest that same year.)

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guarded during the nights by Levites. From these guards the chief priests procured the band who accompanied Judas. ‖ *Officers*. These were the attendants on the Sanhedrim, whose business it was to execute the orders of that body.

6. *And fell to the ground*. Many of this company were doubtless conscious of being engaged in an utterly wrong business; and the sight of their victim, with the calmness and dignity which he displayed in speaking to them, had the effect of disarming them. A sudden rush upon their consciences of a feeling of guilt, and an unexpected manner of being met by Jesus, might have the effect mentioned by the evangelist. Some of these men were, in all probability, the same as are mentioned in 7: 32, 45, 46. They could not forget the favorable impression made on their minds on the occasion related in that chapter. A guilty conscience has a palsying effect on its possessor.

9. *That the saying, &c.* See 17: 12. The declaration referred to was, in an inferior sense, applicable to the preservation which Jesus now sought for his disciples. In its full meaning, it doubtless related to their everlasting salvation. But as they were now protected against foes, the sentiment before expressed was happily applicable. It is probable that some of the assailants wished to apprehend the disciples.

10, 11. Compare Matt. 26: 51—54. Luke 22: 50, 51.

12. *Then the band—took Jesus*. From the other evangelists we learn, that Judas pointed out Jesus by kissing him. See Matt. 26: 48. Mark 14: 44, 45. Luke 22: 47. Though Jesus had spoken to the band, yet as it was night, and as there was much agitation, it would be necessary, in order to be sure of seizing the proper person, that he should be distinctly pointed out. ‖ *Bound him*. It was common to *bind* those who were apprehended as criminals. See Acts 21: 33.

13. *Annas*. He had been high priest eleven years, and was probably

14 Now Caiaphas was he which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.

15 And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and *so did* another disciple. That disciple was known unto the high priest, and went in with Jesus, into the palace of the high priest.

16 But Peter stood at the door without. Then went out that other disciple which was known unto the high priest, and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter.

17 Then saith the damsel that kept the door unto Peter, Art not thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not.

18 And the servants and officers stood there, who had made a fire of coals; (for it was cold;) and they warmed themselves: and Peter stood with them, and warmed himself.

19 The high priest then asked Jesus of his disciples, and of his doctrine.

20 Jesus answered him, I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing.

21 Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said.

22 And when he had thus spoken, one of the officers which stood by, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so?

23 Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me?

24 (Now Annas had sent him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest.)

25 And Simon Peter stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not thou also *one* of his disciples? He denied *it*, and said, I am not.

26 One of the servants of the high priest (being *his* kinsman whose ear Peter cut off) saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?

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at the time here spoken of assistant high priest. See on Luke 3 : 2. This circumstance, together with his relationship to Caiaphas, the real high priest, made it important that he should be consulted in such a transaction as was now in progress. Compare Matt. 26 : 57

14. *Which gave counsel.* Compare 11 : 49, 50.

15. *Another disciple;* doubtless John himself. ‖ *Palace of the high priest.* The Jews, having first conducted Jesus to the house of Annas, led him thence to the house of Caiaphas, the high priest. This circumstance is not distinctly mentioned by John in its natural order, though it is implied in the mention of the high priest's palace. See v. 24. It was at the house of Caiaphas, that Peter denied his Master. See Matt. 26 : 57, 69, &c.

17. Compare Matt. 26 : 69, 70.

18. *Coals;* properly, live coals. ‖ *It was cold.* It was the month of April, and in the night. In Palestine, at that season, the nights are sufficiently cold to require a fire.

25—27. Compare Matt. 26 : 71—75.

26. *Being his kinsman, whose ear,* &c. That is, being a relative of the

27 Peter then denied again: and immediately the cock crew.

28 Then led they Jesus from Caiaphas unto the hall of judgment: and it was early; and they themselves went not into the judgment-hall, lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the passover.

29 Pilate then went out unto them, and said, What accusation bring ye against this man?

30 They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, we would not have delivered him up unto thee.

31 Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:

32 That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying what death he should die.

33 Then Pilate entered into the judgment-hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?

34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me?

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man whose ear Peter had cut off. Compare v. 10.

28. *Unto the hall of judgment;* more properly, the palace of the Roman governor. Compare Matt. 27: 2. ‖ *Lest they should be defiled.* They would carefully abstain from much intercourse with a Gentile, lest they should contract defilement, and be unfit to attend on the services of the passover festival. For a similar instance of *conscientiousness*, see Matt. 27: 6. ‖ *Eat the passover.* This expression was applicable to the whole festival of seven days, as well as to the actual eating of the paschal lamb. It was equivalent to the phrase *celebrate the passover.* See on Matt. 26: 17. The paschal lamb had been eaten on the preceding evening; but the festival of unleavened bread, also called the passover, did not begin till the succeeding evening. See on 13: 1.

29. *Pilate went out unto them;* that is, into one of the open courts, or halls, of the palace.

30. *If he were not a malefactor,* &c. Instead of giving a direct reply to Pilate's question, they merely declared, in general terms, that Jesus had been found guilty by them. They probably hoped, that Pilate would not institute an examination, but would at once confirm the sentence which the Sanhedrim had passed. Compare Matt. 26: 66.

31. *Take ye him and judge him,* &c. Pilate thus referred them to their own law, on the presumption that a less severe punishment than it would be necessary for him to sanction, would be found sufficient. ‖ *It is not lawful,* &c. See on Matt. 27: 2. Thus they informed Pilate that by the Jewish tribunal he had been condemned to death.

32. *That the saying of Jesus might be fulfilled,* &c. See 12: 32, 33. It was by Jesus' being delivered over to the Roman authority, that the remark of Jesus in the passage just named was to receive its accomplishment. The Jews could not lawfully put him to death without the sanction of the Roman power. Crucifixion, to which allusion is made in the passage referred to, was also a Roman punishment. The punishment which the Jewish law prescribed for blasphemy, of which crime the Sanhedrim pretended to find him guilty, was stoning. See Lev. 24: 11, 15, 16.

33. *Judgment-hall.* See on v. 28. ‖ *Art thou the King of the Jews?* The ground for this inquiry existed in the fact, that, according to Luke 23: 2, the

35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation, and the chief priests, have delivered thee unto me. What hast thou done?

36 Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.

37 Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth, heareth my voice.

38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault *at all.*

39 But ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye therefore, that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

40 Then cried they all again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber.

CHAPTER XIX.

THEN Pilate therefore took Jesus, and scourged *him.*

accusers of Jesus had brought against him the political charge of setting up himself as a king.

36. *My kingdom, &c.* Jesus tacitly assented to the charge that he had claimed to be king of the Jews; but he informed Pilate, that he had not claimed to be a *king*, in the ordinary, or political, sense of that word; that he had claimed no secular power. Hence the Roman government had no reason to view him with suspicion. ‖ *Not from hence;* not a worldly dominion, but a spiritual, heavenly one.

37. *Thou sayest that I am a king.* This reply may, by a proper punctuation, be thus translated from the original: "Thou sayest *it;* because I am a king." Thus Jesus gave an affirmative reply to the question (see on Matt. 27: 11), and then made a declaration, which was of the same purport. This declaration he immediately proceeded to explain, in accordance with his remark, that his dominion was not an earthly one. ‖ *Bear witness to the truth;* manifest and vindicate divine truth, or true religion. ‖ *Every one that is of the truth;* every one that loves true religion.

38. *What is truth?* The remarks of Jesus were not properly understood by Pilate; nor could he be expected, an unenlightened heathen, to enter into the spirit of the Saviour's declarations. He saw plainly, that Jesus made no pretensions to a secular dominion; and he doubtless believed him to be an innocent man, yet a deluded fanatic. That a man should speak of himself as a king, because he professed to vindicate the truth, appeared to him a singular pretension, and, under the influence of mingled pity and contempt for his harmless enthusiasm, he proposed the inquiry, What is truth? He did not wish to receive an answer; he was not seeking for information, else he would not have gone out immediately. But having the impression that Jesus was a weak-minded, though doubtless well-meaning, religious enthusiast, he carelessly, and probably contemptuously, let fall the inquiry, What do you mean by truth?

39, 40. Compare Matt. 27: 15, 21—23.

CHAPTER XIX.

1. *Scourged him.* See on Matt. 27:

2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put *it* on his head, and they put on him a purple robe,

3 And said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they smote him with their hands.

4 Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him.

5 Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man!

6 When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him*: for I find no fault in him.

7 The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

8 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid;

9 And went again into the judgment-hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer.

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2. *A purple robe.* See on Matt. 27: 28.

6. *Take ye him, and crucify him: for I*, &c. Pilate did not wish to be understood, nor was he understood, as giving his official sanction, at this time, to the crucifixion of Jesus. On the contrary, he expressly declared his conviction that Jesus did not deserve such treatment, and that, if the Jews should crucify him, they would act unjustifiably. He therefore wished to have no connection with such an affair: if they would crucify him, they must do it without his having any share in the responsibility. Such a view of the case was not satisfactory to the Jews, as appears by the next verse, and they endeavored still further to bring over the governor to a more decided compliance with their request.

7. *By our law he ought to die.* The chief priests, finding Pilate not moved so much as they expected he would be by the political accusation, then placed the matter on religious grounds. Jesus had claimed to have a divine commission, to be even the Messiah, the Son of God. They declared that he was an impostor and blasphemer, and as such was condemned by their law to death. See Leviticus 24: 16. They wished Pilate to sanction his being put to death.

8. *When Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid.* Pilate had been much impressed by the conduct of Jesus during the trial (see Matt. 27: 14. Mark 15: 5), and could not but regard him as possessing some very uncommon qualities of character. Being a heathen, Pilate would very naturally connect with the expression *Son of God* some notions to which his education had accustomed him. He was familiar with the popular belief among the Romans that there were many gods, that some were the children of others, and that some distinguished men had traced their descent to some god. The thought probably occurred to Pilate, that possibly Jesus, whose appearance was so different from what might have been expected, was really related to some god, whose displeasure he might incur, if he should yield to the clamors of the Jews. This fear was also in accordance with the dream of which Pilate's wife had sent him information. See Matt. 27: 19.

9. *Whence art thou?* Whence is thy origin? from heaven, or from earth? ‖ *Jesus gave him no answer.*

10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not, that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

11 Jesus answered, Thou couldest have no power *at all* against me, except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Cesar's friend. Whosoever maketh himself a king, speaketh against Cesar.

13 When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat, in a place that is called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew, Gabbatha.

Because to reply would have been of no service, and he had already said enough to Pilate to show him who he was (18: 36, 37); and because he knew that Pilate's conscience was already sufficiently enlightened to teach him how he ought to act.

11. *Except it were given thee from above;* unless divine providence had allowed me to come into thy power. ‖ *Therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.* That is, Since I have come into thy power, not in consequence of my own guilt, but by a very special arrangement and permission of divine providence, — a permission by which hatred and envy have prevailed against innocence, — therefore he that delivered me, &c. The Saviour acknowledged that he was then in the power of Pilate, and that it pertained to him, according to the law of the land, to decide whether the determination of the Jews should, or should not, be carried into effect. But, though *he*, as being the Roman governor, was required by the laws to exercise power either in sanctioning or reversing the decision of the Jews, yet *they* had not the slightest ground for condemning him, and giving him up to Pilate's power. *They* had not acted legally; they had been actuated solely by hatred; and hence, though Pilate himself, as Jesus kindly warns him, would contract great guilt, should he consent to the death of a man against whom he knew there was no valid accusation, yet the high priest, who had been foremost in this matter, and his associates, would be unspeakably more guilty, as having transcended their power, and, in a wholly unauthorized way, condemned an innocent man. The high priest had, against the force of appropriate evidence, and from a malignant disposition, rejected him, and plotted his death.

12. *Cesar's friend.* Tiberius Cesar was the Roman emperor, to whom the Jews were subject, and by whose appointment Pilate was governor of Judea. The Jews declared to Pilate that, if he should release Jesus, who claimed to be a king, he would give convincing evidence that he had renounced his attachment and allegiance to the Roman emperor. Their declaration was intended to convey the hint that, if he should release Jesus, they would report him to Cesar as an unfaithful governor, and procure his dismissal from office, and his disgrace. This appeal to his love of office, and of power, prevailed, alas! over his sense of right.

13. *The Pavement.* This was a place in front of the palace, somewhat elevated, and paved with small pieces of marble, precious stones, glass, &c. On this pavement, which was a temporary ornament, the tribunal was erected. The Roman generals and governors provided themselves with such pavements to adorn the floor of their tents when in the field, and of parts of their palaces; and they carried with them, when they went abroad on military expedi-

14 And it was the preparation of the passover, and about the sixth hour: and he saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

15 But they cried out, Away with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cesar.

16 Then delivered he him therefore unto them to be cruci-

tions, or to the government of provinces, pieces of marble, &c. fitted so as to form a paved surface.

14. *It was the preparation of the passover.* The word translated *preparation* was used, among the Jews, to denote the day, or a part of the day, before a festival or sacred day, as furnishing opportunity to prepare for it. The day here spoken of was the day immediately preceding the festival of unleavened bread. That festival was to commence at the beginning of the fifteenth day, the next day after the eating of the paschal lamb. The day of the week here spoken of was Friday, and the whole of Friday was the preparation day for the festival. See on 13: 1. It must be borne in mind that the Jewish day of twenty-four hours commenced at sunset; so that the festival of unleavened bread, called also the *passover*, began that year at the time which we should call the evening of Friday. ‖ *About the sixth hour.* The sixth hour corresponded to our twelve o'clock. But, according to Mark, 15: 25, it was the third hour, or nine o'clock, when Jesus was crucified; and, according to Matt. 27: 45, Jesus was on the cross at twelve o'clock, and the three hours of darkness then commenced. For a reconciliation of this difference in the statements, see the note on Matt. 27: 45. In addition to the remarks in that note, another method of reconciliation is proposed. The Jews were in the habit of dividing the day, as well as the night, into four parts, of three hours each. The second of these divisions began at the third hour, and ended at the sixth, that is, at nine o'clock and at twelve. Now John, in his notice of the time, might have included not merely Pilate's giving up Jesus to the Jews, but also the crucifixion which followed; and he might have intended to say that those things, viewed in connection, occurred about, or towards, twelve o'clock, towards the latter part of that division which commenced at nine. Mark, on the other hand, might have meant to signify that, at the commencement of this division, the arrangements immediately connected with the crucifixion were in progress, so that the crucifixion was completed during that division. The crucifixion occurred between those two points of time. The language of John does not mark the time *precisely*, and it would be correct, if the time was considerably nearer to twelve than to nine. Mark's mention of nine o'clock would seem, if we consider how much time must have been occupied in the transactions with Pilate, then with Herod (Luke 23: 7), and then again with Pilate, to include the preparations for crucifixion as well as the particular event of the crucifixion. If the crucifixion, then, after all the preliminary arrangements, actually occurred at about eleven o'clock, the statements of the two evangelists are sufficiently harmonious. They both agree in the particular *division* of time, but one groups together all the circumstances as *completed* towards the *end* of that division; the other contemplates the *commencement* of those circumstances at the *beginning* of that division. It may be proper also to remark, in illustration of John's manner of speaking, that, if a public execution should take place at eleven o'clock, just before, or just after, a person afterwards giving an account of it, and not intending to mention the time *precisely*, might very naturally say, "It occurred at about noon."

led. And they took Jesus, and led *him* away.

17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew, Golgotha:

18 Where they crucified him, and two others with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst.

19 And Pilate wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS.

20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, *and* Greek, *and* Latin.

21 Then said the chief priests of the Jews to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that he said, I am King of the Jews.

22 Pilate answered, What I have written, I have written.

23 Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also *his* coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout.

24 They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it whose it shall be: that the scripture might be fulfilled, which saith, They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots. These things therefore the soldiers did.

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus, his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the *wife* of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene.

26 When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son!

27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And

17, 18. Compare Matt. 27: 32, 33, 38.

19. *A title;* an inscription. See on Matt. 27: 37.

22. *What I have written*, &c. Pilate declared, by this remark, that he would not alter what he had ordered to be written.

23, 24. Compare Matt. 27: 35. *His coat;* his inner garment.

25. *Cleophas.* In the original, this name is spelled *Clopas*, and it is different from the name *Cleopas* in Luke 24: 18. Clopas is believed to have been the same person as is elsewhere called *Alpheus*. See Matt. 10: 3. Mark 3: 18. Both Clopas and Alpheus correspond to one and the same Hebrew name. Clopas was husband of Mary, the sister of our Lord's mother; James and Joses were children of that Mary (Matt. 27: 56), and James was son of Alpheus. Hence Alpheus and Clopas are names of the same person.

26. *The disciple — whom he loved;* John himself, the writer of this Gospel. Compare 13: 23. || *Behold thy son.* Jesus thus designated John as a special protector of his afflicted mother. His mother, now that he himself was taken from her, was to rely upon John for the care and attention that she might require.

27. *Behold thy mother;* become a son to this afflicted woman. How strong the affection of Jesus for his mother! How lovely this example of filial respect and care! Who can fail to feel the force of it? It has been handed down by tradition from early times, that John continued to

from that hour that disciple took her unto his own *home*.

28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst.

29 Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop, and put *it* to his mouth.

30 When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

31 The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, that the bodies should not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath-day, (for that Sabbath-day was a high day,) besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that* they might be taken away.

32 Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him.

33 But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs:

34 But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water.

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reside in Jerusalem until the mother of Jesus died.

28. *That the scripture might be fulfilled.* This clause relates to the circumstance just before mentioned, namely, that all things respecting Jesus were now accomplished. It intimates that Jesus knew he had now accomplished what the Scriptures had foretold, and that it only remained for him to die.

29. *There was set;* there was placed there. ‖ *Vinegar.* The original word signifies the inferior sort of wine used by the Roman soldiers, and which they always carried with them. This was a different sort of drink from the one offered to Jesus before he was crucified. See Matt. 27 : 34. ‖ *Hyssop.* Compare Matt. 27 : 48.

31. *The preparation.* See on v. 14; also Mark 15 : 42. Two or three hours of Friday, before sunset, were signified by the word *preparation*, as being employed in making preparation for the Sabbath. The Jewish Sabbath commenced at the sunset of Friday evening. ‖ *That the bodies should not remain, &c.* The Jewish law required that the body of a criminal who had been hung, that is, suspended in any manner on an instrument of punishment, should not remain suspended all night. It must be taken down and buried before night. See Deut. 21 : 22, 23. It was also considered highly improper that the dead body of a criminal should be exposed to view during the Sabbath. ‖ *For that Sabbath-day was a high day;* was a great day. The usual weekly Sabbath was, that year, the same day as the first day of unleavened bread, the festival to which the name *passover* was also given. Hence it was an uncommonly sacred and joyful Sabbath. The first day of the festival was itself a kind of Sabbath, a day in which no servile work was allowed, and on which there was to be a holy assembling of the people. See Lev. 23 : 6, 7. When this first day fell on the weekly Sabbath, the Sabbath was then, so to speak, doubly sacred. ‖ *That their legs might be broken.* It was usual by such acts of violence to hasten the death of a crucified person. The legs were broken by a club of wood, or a bar of iron. Since, however, such a bruising might not hasten death sufficiently soon, it is supposed by some writers that one of the party usually gave a thrust in a vital part of the body.

34. *Pierced his side.* This could easily be done with a spear, as a cru-

35 And he that saw *it*, bare record, and his record is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe.

36 For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.

37 And again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.

38 And after this, Joseph of Arimathea (being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews) besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore and took the body of Jesus.

39 And there came also Nicodemus, (which at the first came to Jesus by night,) and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds *weight*.

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cified person was elevated only about three feet above the ground. ‖ *Came thereout blood and water.* Such an effusion was, according to anatomists, a natural result of piercing the pericardium, that is, the membrane which encloses the heart; there being in that membrane a small quantity of watery fluid.

35. *He that saw it;* John himself. ‖ *That ye might believe;* believe more firmly.

36. *That the scripture should be fulfilled.* See Ex. 12: 46. Num. 9: 12. ‖ *A bone of him;* rather *of it*, namely, of the passover-lamb. The passover-lamb was at first designed as the means and the signal of deliverance to the Jews from death in Egypt; and Jesus was the appointed Saviour from eternal death. Besides the resemblance between the lamb and Jesus, as to the design of their suffering death, there was a more particular resemblance in the circumstance that not a bone of the lamb was to be broken, and not a bone in the body of Jesus was broken, while yet in ordinary cases it might have been expected that some bones of a crucified person would be broken. Such a minute resemblance is noted by John as happily adapted to confirm the faith of his readers in Jesus as the true Saviour. It was in preparation for this Saviour, that the civil and religious arrangements of the Jewish nation had been divinely appointed; and to him, as the Lamb of God that should take away the sin of the world (1: 29), the passover-lamb had a special reference. The resemblance here observed by the evangelist indicated the special providence of God; and the more numerous and minute such resemblances were, the more manifest was it that Jesus of Nazareth was truly that Great One to whom testimony was borne in the Jewish Scriptures. The same divine hand which established the Jewish scheme of religion, and which guided the writers of the Old Testament, displayed itself in all the events pertaining to Jesus, and marked him out as the object to which the Jewish rites and ceremonies had reference.

37. *Another scripture.* Zech. 12: 10. The expressions which God had employed in that passage with reference to his own treatment by the Jews, were remarkably applicable to the case of the Saviour.

38. Compare Matt. 27: 57, 58.

39. *Came to Jesus by night.* See 3: 2. ‖ *Myrrh.* See on Matt. 2: 11. ‖ *Aloes.* This was not the same article as is so called among us. It was the name of a tree, the wood of which was highly aromatic, and was employed by the Orientals as a perfume, and by the Egyptians for embalming dead bodies. ‖ *A hundred pounds weight.* Such a quantity may seem needlessly large. But, besides what was needed for the anointing of the body, the part of the sepulchre where the corpse was to be laid would need to be thoroughly perfumed. Besides,

40 Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

41 Now in the place where he was crucified, there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

42 There laid they Jesus therefore, because of the Jews' preparation-*day;* for the sepulchre was nigh at hand.

CHAPTER XX.

THE first *day* of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre.

2 Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.

3 Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre.

4 So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.

5 And he, stooping down, *and looking in*, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in.

6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie;

7 And the napkin that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself.

8 Then went in also that other disciple which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed.

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the corpse might have been laid on a quantity of the aromatic substances, forming a sort of bed. As the Saviour's body was buried somewhat hastily, it might have been the intention of Joseph and Nicodemus to come again to the sepulchre, and in due form to bury the Saviour; a part of which form, when special respect was meant to be paid, consisted in burning large quantities of aromatic substances.

40. Compare Matt. 27 : 59. *To bury.* The word in the original signifies the preparing for burial rather than the act itself of burying.

42. *The sepulchre was nigh at hand;* nigh to the place of the crucifixion, which was also nigh to the city. See v. 20. Having prepared the corpse as decently as they could, they deposited it in the sepulchre. They then hastened into the city, on account of the Sabbath's approach, which would be reckoned from the setting of the sun.

CHAPTER XX.

1. *The stone taken away.* Compare Mark 16 : 3, 4. Matt. 27 : 60. 28 : 2.

2. *The other disciple, &c.* See 19 : 26. ‖ *Where they have laid him.* Mary was not expecting the resurrection of Jesus; and she supposed that some persons had removed the corpse to another spot.

8. *He saw, and believed.* Not only was the body not there, but the whole appearance of the sepulchre indicated that the corpse had not been removed without being reanimated. The orderly laying aside of the burial-clothes showed that something had happened different from the mere removing of a corpse.

9 For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.

10 Then the disciples went away again unto their own home.

11 But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down *and looked* into the sepulchre,

12 And seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.

13 And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.

14 And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus.

15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.

16 Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni, which is to say, Master.

17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not: for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and *to* my God and your God.

18 Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and *that* he had spoken these things unto her.

19 Then the same day at evening, being the first *day* of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace *be* unto you.

20 And when he had so said,

9. *Knew not the scripture;* had not understood the scripture. See Ps. 16: 10, compared with Acts 2: 31.

11. *Mary stood without at the sepulchre.* Having informed Peter and John, she had herself come back to the sepulchre.

16. *Jesus saith unto her, Mary.* His familiarly speaking to her by her name, as one that was well acquainted with her, and in a tone of voice to which she had long been accustomed, at once convinced her that it was Jesus who was speaking to her. ‖ *Rabboni.* This was the most honorable of the titles used among the Jews. It is immediately explained by the evangelist.

17. *Touch me not.* Mary was doubtless prostrating herself at the feet of Jesus, intending to embrace them. ‖ *For I am not yet ascended,* &c. This remark was made probably to induce Mary not to consume time then in showing respect and in paying homage. She would have time for this purpose hereafter. Jesus would, at the proper period, ascend to his Father; but he had not yet gone, and it was rather suitable that Mary should communicate to the disciples the joyful tidings of her having seen him, than that she should privately indulge her emotions of love and delight.

19. *Came Jesus.* He came unexpectedly. Without apprizing them of his being near, he entered the room where they were assembled. The language implies that there was some-

he showed unto them *his* hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord.

21 Then said Jesus to them again, Peace *be* unto you: as *my* Father hath sent me, even so send I you.

22 And when he had said this, he breathed on *them*, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.

23 Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; *and* whose soever *sins* ye retain, they are retained.

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

26 And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: *then* came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you.

27 Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust *it* into my side; and be not faithless, but believing.

28 And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.

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thing unusual in his manner of presenting himself among the disciples; but whether it was miraculous or not, does not appear. The language of Luke, 24: 37, shows that the disciples regarded his presenting himself among them as wholly out of the ordinary course. ‖ *Peace be unto you.* One of the common modes of salutation. See Luke 24: 36.

21. *So send I you.* Compare 17: 18.

22. *He breathed on them.* An emblematic act, signifying his bestowal of the Holy Spirit, which was soon to take place. Compare 16: 7, 13. The Saviour here spoke by anticipation, and as giving a new assurance of the promise already made.

23. *Whose soever sins ye remit, &c.* The Saviour addressed the disciples as his apostles and representatives. They were appointed, and were soon to be fully qualified, as the authoritative ministers of the Messiah, for making known his will. As Jesus had been the authorized messenger of the Father, able to communicate without mistake his will, so the apostles were to be fully authorized to act in the Messiah's place, as making known the great principles of the new religion, and able to answer the inquiry, Who shall receive forgiveness of sin, and from whom shall forgiveness be withholden? They would be qualified to instruct men respecting the will of God in reference to pardon, and whatever principles they should announce as regulating the pardon of sin, those would be the principles recognized in heaven. This fulness of qualification, which would render them the authoritative ambassadors of the Messiah, and interpreters of his will, would proceed from the influence of the Holy Spirit. This passage is of the same import as Matt. 16: 19, and 18: 18.

24. *Called Didymus.* Compare 11: 16.

28. *My Lord and my God.* Thomas was struck with astonishment, so convincing was the evidence that he who stood before him was in reality his

29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed.

30 And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

Master. The emotions which suddenly sprung up in his heart he could express in no other way, than by the exclamation in which he recognized him, and with increased reliance confided in him, not only as being his Master, but also as being immensely superior to what he had once supposed. Thomas spoke in an excited state of mind; but he distinctly perceived, that something more than human pertained to Jesus. In order rightly to appreciate the feelings of Thomas, it is necessary to consider that on previous occasions Jesus had made such a display of power and knowledge as filled the disciples with awe (see Matt. 8: 27. 14: 25—33. Luke 5: 8), and that, during his conversation just before being betrayed, he had dwelt with great particularity on the topic that he was most intimately united with the Father. In addition, Thomas was deeply impressed by the manner in which Jesus had just addressed him, as showing that Jesus was not a stranger to the doubts and unbelief which Thomas had expressed. All these circumstances united were acting on his mind, and under their influence he uttered his exclamation. Jesus made no objection to it; and we may therefore regard him as assenting to the propriety of Thomas's language. His language, too, accords with the sentiment which was afterwards more fully embraced by the disciples, and which is so distinctly announced in the first verse of this Gospel. There was, doubtless, among the disciples an increasing reverence for their Master; and occasionally there broke forth from them expressions of astonishment, which were afterwards to prove, even far more fully than the disciples then perceived, most strictly conformed to the whole truth respecting Jesus.

29. *Because thou hast seen me, &c.* Jesus here gently reproved an unreasonable indulgence of doubt, and a demanding of greater evidence than is necessary: he also commended a willingness to yield to evidence which is appropriate and sufficient, though it be not so great as might be furnished. Such evidence Thomas had had in the testimony of his brethren; but he sought for stronger evidence, determined to trust only to his own personal sight.

Remark. When we have appropriate and sufficient evidence in regard to religious matters, such as, in regard to other subjects, would be deemed sufficient, we ought not to withstand it, whether it be the evidence of testimony or of sight. The Saviour does not require us to believe any fact, or any doctrine, of his religion, without appropriate evidence. But when such evidence is furnished, it is sinful not to yield to it. When that evidence is not so abundant as it might, in possible circumstances, be, yet it warrants and should receive our belief. This spirit of simply trusting to proper testimony is pleasing to the Saviour, and is most obviously adapted to our whole nature and to all our circumstances. But a resisting of appropriate evidence because it may not be so strong as we think ought to be demanded, argues a wrong state of mind, and may hinder a person from feeling the force of the most abundant evidence.

31. *Life through his name;* eternal life through him.

CHAPTER XXI.

AFTER these things Jesus showed himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias: and on this wise showed he *himself*.

2 There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, and the *sons* of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.

3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing.

4 But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

5 Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6 And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7 Therefore that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his* fisher's coat *unto him*, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

8 And the other disciples came in a little ship (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits) dragging the net with fishes.

9 As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

10 Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11 Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12 Jesus saith unto them, Come *and* dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

CHAPTER XXI.

1. *The sea of Tiberias;* the same as the sea of Galilee; called also the lake of Gennesaret. See Matt. 4 : 18. Luke 5 : 1.

2. *Nathanael;* supposed by some to be the same person as Bartholomew. See on Matt. 10 : 3. ‖ *Cana.* See 2 : 1.

4. *Knew not that it was Jesus.* They could not well distinguish at such a distance, and so early in the morning.

5. *Children;* a familiar and affectionate term of address. Compare 13 : 33. ‖ *Meat;* food. See on Matt. 3 : 4. The original word expresses *something to be eaten with* bread; such as meat or fish.

6. *Right side;* right in distinction, not from the *wrong*, but from the *left*.

7. *Fisher's coat;* a sort of frock without sleeves, reaching to the knees, and worn over the inside tunic. ‖ *Naked.* This term was applied to a person who had thrown off his outer garment. See on Mark 14 : 51.

8. *A little ship;* probably *the boat* in which the disciples had been during the night. ‖ *Two hundred cubits;* equal to three hundred feet.

12. *Dine.* The word in the original was sometimes applied to an early meal (v. 4) as well as to a meal at a later hour.

13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14 This is now the third time that Jesus showed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

15 So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

16 He saith to him again the second time, Simon *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

17 He saith unto him the third time, Simon *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

18 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou

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13. *And giveth them.* As on former occasions, so now, Jesus performed the part of the head of the family.

15. *More than these?* that is, more than these other disciples love me. The Saviour had reference to the fact, that Peter had always been foremost in expressions of zeal and attachment in respect to his Master, and had declared a determination to be faithful though all the other disciples should forsake Jesus. See Matt. 26: 33. Compare John 13: 37. Peter had also just shown a peculiar attachment to Jesus by hastening from the boat and swimming to the shore. ‖ *Yea, Lord: thou knowest*, &c. Peter would not claim for himself a stronger love to his Master than his brethren possessed, but modestly declared, that he did love his Master. ‖ *Lambs;* a metaphorical term, meaning *followers.* Jesus compared himself to a shepherd; and Peter was, under him, to take care of the flock. The word *lambs* in this verse is of the same signification as the word *sheep* in the two following verses; just as these two words are used without difference of meaning in Matt. 10: 16 and Luke 10: 3. If there were any difference, it probably amounted to this, that the use of the word *lamb* was more strikingly indicative of affection for the flock than that of the word *sheep.*

17. *The third time.* Thus the Saviour not only reminded Peter of his having thrice denied his Lord, but also gave him an opportunity, in the presence of his fellow-disciples, of thrice recalling the denial, and of thrice, in very solemn circumstances, avowing his sincere love to him. ‖ *Thou knowest all things.* Jesus had so often shown an intimate acquaintance with the hearts and thoughts of those who were around him, that Peter would now appeal to Jesus himself as knowing his very heart, and as one who could not be deceived.

18. *Thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst*, &c. The dress of the Orientals was loose and flowing; so that when they went abroad, or were particularly engaged in any labor, it was necessary to fasten their outside garment with a girdle. See Luke, 12: 35. The purport of the Saviour's remark was, that Peter had never been restrained from the use of his liberty; he had never been subjected to compulsion. ‖ *Stretch forth thine hands;* so that they may be bound, like a captive's hands. ‖ *Gird thee.*

shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry *thee* whither thou wouldest not.

19 This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me.

20 Then Peter, turning about, seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following; (which also leaned on his breast at supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee?)

21 Peter seeing him, saith to Jesus, Lord, and what *shall* this man *do?*

22 Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee? Follow thou me.

23 Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what *is that* to thee?

The term *gird* is here used as equivalent to the word *chain*. The idea is, Another shall gird thee, not with an ordinary girdle, but with a chain.

19. *Signifying by what death, &c.* Compare 2 Pet. 1 : 14. Jesus thus forewarned Peter, that the love which he had professed would be put to a severe test. Bonds and a violent death awaited him. He must therefore be on his guard, and adhere faithfully to his profession. History accordingly informs us that the apostle Peter suffered death by crucifixion, with his head downwards, at Rome, during the reign of the emperor Nero. ‖ *Follow me;* as thine example, imitate me in submitting to a violent death, faithful to thy professions, and with meek acquiescence. Compare Matt. 10 : 38.

20. *Peter — seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved, following.* Jesus, having addressed Peter, as is related in the two preceding verses, probably turned from him, and gave John some intimation of a desire to speak privately with him. John therefore commenced walking after Jesus. ‖ *Leaned on his breast at supper.* See 13 : 23—25.

21. *What shall this man do?* In what way, as to death, will he glorify God? What shall his end be?

22. *Tarry;* remain on earth. The force of the Saviour's inquiry lies in the word *if;* as though he had said, Even *if* I had purposed that he should remain on earth till my coming, that would be no concern of thine. Jesus did not mean to imply that he had formed such a purpose respecting John; he wished to check the unprofitable curiosity of Peter, and to suggest to him the importance of diligent attention to his own duties. What was the precise meaning of Jesus in the expression *till I come*, it is difficult to determine. His *coming* might relate either to his coming by means of death to receive his followers to himself (John 14 : 3), or to an expected glorious manifestation of his kingly power at the termination of the present state (Matt. 25 : 31). The suggestion contained in the expression seems to be, If I choose that he should not die at all, but should remain on earth till I come finally and fully to reward my servants, even if that were my will, what is that to thee? The Saviour thought it proper not to gratify the curiosity of Peter; and therefore he mentioned merely a supposable case.

23. *Among the brethren;* the Christians, who afterwards heard of the Saviour's remark. ‖ *That that disciple should not die;* that he would remain alive on earth, till the Messiah should come to reward his followers. It is worthy of remark that John lived to an extreme old age, and died a natural death.

24 This is the disciple which testifieth of these things, and wrote these things: and we know that his testimony is true.

25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

24. *We know, &c.* It was well known among all who were acquainted with John, that he was a man of strict veracity. The writer of these words, whether it was John himself, or a person whom he employed to write or copy his Gospel, here associates himself with the numerous company that were acquainted with the character of John.

25. *The world itself could not contain the books, &c.* A very strong method of conveying the thought, that an account of all the acts and teaching of Jesus would require a very large number of volumes, and that what John had furnished ought to be regarded in the light of *a sketch* of the acts and teaching of Jesus.

Reflection. Let us admire the care of divine providence, which has furnished us with these sketches of the life, and teaching, and death, of Jesus Christ. These sketches reveal to us the true Saviour, and the only way to heaven. Faintly as they may disclose the glory of our Redeemer, they yet present such traces of divine excellence as may well call forth ardent aspirations for that fuller knowledge of him which will be imparted to those who shall see him as he is. The faint glimmerings which we here enjoy are adapted to our present state — intended not so much to satisfy us as to excite our desires for more intimate knowledge. If what we can now know of his excellent greatness, his spotless purity, his matchless condescension, produces such an admiration of his character, and warrants an unlimited confidence in his redeeming power and love, what *delight* and what reverence must pervade the soul that shall be admitted into his presence, and join the heavenly anthem, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing!"

"O let me climb those higher skies,
Where storms and darkness never rise:
There he displays his power abroad,
And shines and reigns the Incarnate God!

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Nor heaven, his full resemblance bears;
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